

I 320-9
ILLI
J. 27
No 12
C 3

Illinois Issues

December 2001 \$3.95

A publication of the University of Illinois at Springfield

ILLINOIS DOCUMENTS



*Imagine
Illinois*

Art reflects the landscape
and the people

PUBLIC TV STATIONS

WEIU
Charleston

WILL
Champaign

WMEC/WQEC/WSEC
Macomb, Quincy
Jacksonville/Springfield

WQPT
Moline

WSIU
Carbondale

WTVP
Peoria

WUSI
Olney

WYCC
Chicago

PUBLIC RADIO STATIONS

WBEZ FM
Chicago

WCBU FM
Peoria

WDCB FM
Glen Ellyn

WGLT FM
Normal

WILL AM
Urbana

WIUM/WIUW FM
Macomb, Warsaw

WNIJ FM
DeKalb, Rockford,
Sterling, LaSalle, Freeport

WNIU FM
Rockford, Dekalb

WSIE FM
Edwardsville

WUIS/WIPA FM
Springfield, Pittsfield



*Harness the power
of public broadcasting
across Illinois...*

*Chicago and the suburbs
Rockford to Carbondale
Charleston to Quincy*

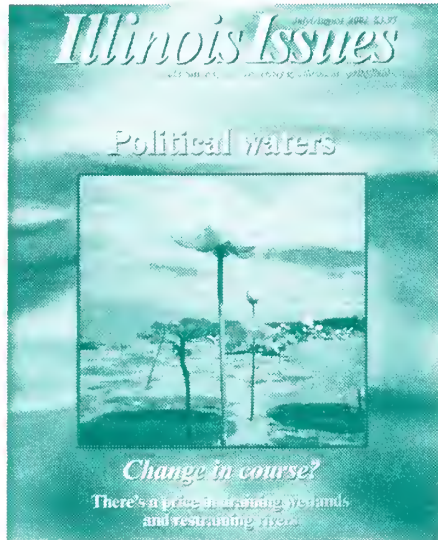
Get the undivided attention of the most influential, educated, and affluent citizens in Illinois along with the top business decision makers.

Tap into public radio and television stations around the state and make your underwriting dollars work for you with a single phone call to the **Public Broadcasting Cooperative of Illinois** at

630/585-7596

Visit our new web site at **www.PBCIonline.org**

Holiday Gift Subscription



to *Illinois Issues*

Give the gift
to last all year
One-year
subscription

(January-December 2002)

11 issues
of *Illinois Issues*
Magazine, plus
2002 Roster
of State Government Officials
for only **\$34.95**

Please send subscription to:

Name _____
Address _____ State _____ Zip _____
City _____

From:

Name _____
Address _____ State _____ Zip _____
City _____

☐ Send a gift card with book
☐ Payment of \$34.95 (payable to *Illinois Issues*)
☐ Credit card ☐ VISA ☐ Mastercard Exp. Date _____

Acct. No. _____
Signature _____



BGIFT01

down to us, which suggests they don't respect our ability to think.

Paludan's perspective is especially intriguing because he's among the top Lincoln scholars in the United States. He believes one mark of Lincoln's greatness was his insistence on taking the high road in his speeches.

Lincoln's approach, Paludan says, provides a sharp contrast to the incivility of much of today's public debate. Paludan spoke eloquently on the subject after being invested November 7 at the University of Illinois at Springfield as the first scholar to hold The Naomi B. Lynn Distinguished Chair in Lincoln Studies.

His commentary about the nobility of civil discourse is timely. As he was speaking, it's possible — no, likely — that Illinois campaign strategists already were planning television ads and brochures for the March primary that viciously attack and distort their opponents' positions and characters.

It's the Illinois way. Former Gov. James Thompson reminded the Civic Federation before the 1998 elections

asked readers to send me copies of offensive campaign messages. There has not been a shortage, and that's what led me to write three years ago (see December 1998) in this space that too much of what we saw in 1998 was misleading, nasty or irrelevant.

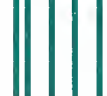
So if you start seeing ads you detest, think of Lincoln and Paludan: remember that it could be different. It really could. And think of their admonition that candidates who talk down to us don't respect us. They really don't.

Diana Nelson will become the new chair of the *Illinois Issues* Board in January. She's a former state representative who is now the public affairs director of the Union League Club of Chicago. She follows former Senate President Philip Rock, who served us well as the chair for most of the 1990s. I'm delighted our board members elected Nelson as chair at the November meeting. She's enthusiastic and thoughtful and has raised the Union League's visibility in recent years. My guess is that she'll do the same for our board. □

Jack H. Knott, director, Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois.
Joan W. Levy, past president, Illinois Association of School Boards, Winnetka.
William E. Lowry, vice president for Human Resources and Administration, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Chicago.
Roberta Lynch, deputy director, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Chicago.
M. Veronica Lynch, chief deputy assessor, Cook County.
Jeff Mays, president, Illinois Business Roundtable, Chicago.
Dawn Clark Netsch, professor of law emeritus, Northwestern University School of Law, Chicago.
Taylor Pensoneau, president, Illinois Coal Association, Springfield.
Betsy A. Plank, principal, Betsy Plank Public Relations, Chicago.
Philip J. Rock, attorney, Rock, Fusco, and Garvey, Ltd., Chicago.
Chuck Scholz, mayor of Quincy.
Nina Shepherd, higher education governance consultant, Winnetka.
Paul Simon, director, The Public Policy Institute, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.
Wim Wiewel, dean, College of Business Administration, University of Illinois at Chicago.
Ed Wojcicki, ex officio.

MEMBERS EMERITUS (years served on board in parentheses)

James L. Fletcher (1983-2000), William C. Harris (1986-93), David Kenney (1978-90), Louis H. Masotti (1978-92), James T. Otis (1975-94), David J. Paulus (1988-94), Carl Shier (1978-87).



NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 1901 SPRINGFIELD, IL

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE



Illinois Issues

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT SPRINGFIELD

PO Box 19243

Springfield, IL 62794-9980



PUBLIC RADIO STATIONS

WBEZ FM
Chicago

WCBU FM
Peoria

WDCB FM
Glen Ellyn

WGLT FM
Normal

WILL AM
Urbana

WIUM/WIUW FM
Macomb, Warsaw

WNIJ FM
DeKalb, Rockford,
Sterling, LaSalle, Freeport

WNIU FM
Rockford, DeKalb

WSIE FM
Edwardsville

WUIS/WIPA FM
Springfield, Pittsfield

across Illinois...

*Chicago and the suburbs
Rockford to Carbondale
Charleston to Quincy*

Get the undivided attention of the most influential, educated, and affluent citizens in Illinois along with the top business decision makers.

Tap into public radio and television stations around the state and make your underwriting dollars work for you with a single phone call to the **Public Broadcasting Cooperative** of Illinois at

630/585-7596

Visit our new web site at **WWW.PBCIonline.org**

Ed Wojcicki



Civility in campaigns may be tested here again

by Ed Wojcicki

Phillip Paludan says he can tell when public officials don't respect citizens. We can tell what others think of us, he says, by the way they talk to us. Too many officials talk down to us, which suggests they don't respect our ability to think.

Paludan's perspective is especially intriguing because he's among the top Lincoln scholars in the United States. He believes one mark of Lincoln's greatness was his insistence on taking the high road in his speeches.

Lincoln's approach, Paludan says, provides a sharp contrast to the incivility of much of today's public debate. Paludan spoke eloquently on the subject after being invested November 7 at the University of Illinois at Springfield as the first scholar to hold The Naomi B. Lynn Distinguished Chair in Lincoln Studies.

His commentary about the nobility of civil discourse is timely. As he was speaking, it's possible — no, likely — that Illinois campaign strategists already were planning television ads and brochures for the March primary that viciously attack and distort their opponents' positions and characters.

It's the Illinois way. Former Gov. James Thompson reminded the Civic Federation before the 1998 elections

that American politics have always been "raw, cruel and personal." It's a message we love to hate, even as we brace for the next round of distasteful ads.

Several times in recent years, I have asked readers to send me copies of offensive campaign messages. There has not been a shortage, and that's what led me to write three years ago (see December 1998) in this space that too much of what we saw in 1998 was misleading, nasty or irrelevant.

So if you start seeing ads you detest, think of Lincoln and Paludan; remember that it could be different. It really could. And think of their admonition that candidates who talk down to us don't respect us. They really don't.

Diana Nelson will become the new chair of the *Illinois Issues* Board in January. She's a former state representative who is now the public affairs director of the Union League Club of Chicago. She follows former Senate President Philip Rock, who served us well as the chair for most of the 1990s. I'm delighted our board members elected Nelson as chair at the November meeting. She's enthusiastic and thoughtful and has raised the Union League's visibility in recent years. My guess is that she'll do the same for our board. □

ACTING CHAIR

Diana Nelson, director of public affairs, Union League of Chicago.

MEMBERS

MarySue Barrett, president, Metropolitan Planning Council, Chicago.

James M. Banovetz, professor emeritus of public administration, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb.

Robert J. Christie, vice president, government relations, Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Chicago.

Ernest L. Cowles, interim executive director, Institute for Public Affairs, University of Illinois at Springfield.

Don Defoe, manager, state governmental affairs, Caterpillar Inc., Springfield.

Darcy Davidsmeyer, director, state government relations, Motorola Inc., Schaumburg.

Jim Edgar, senior fellow, Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois.

Sharon Gist Gilliam, executive vice president, Unison Consulting Group Inc., Chicago.

Rey Gonzalez, assistant vice president, Diversity Initiatives, McDonald's Corp., Oak Brook.

Samuel K. Gove, professor emeritus of political science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Doris B. Holleb, professorial lecturer, University of Chicago.

Jetta Norris Jones, attorney, Chicago.

Robert J. Klaus, president and CEO, Oral Health America, Chicago.

Jack H. Knott, director, Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois.

Joan W. Levy, past president, Illinois Association of School Boards, Winnetka.

William E. Lowry, vice president for Human Resources and Administration, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Chicago.

Robert A. Lynch, deputy director, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Chicago.

M. Veronica Lynch, chief deputy assessor, Cook County.

Jeff Mays, president, Illinois Business Roundtable, Chicago.

Dawn Clark Netsch, professor of law emeritus, Northwestern University School of Law, Chicago.

Taylor Pensoneau, president, Illinois Coal Association, Springfield.

Betsy A. Plank, principal, Betsy Plank Public Relations, Chicago.

Philip J. Rock, attorney, Rock, Fusco, and Garvey, Ltd., Chicago.

Chuck Scholtz, mayor of Quincy.

Nina Shepherd, higher education governance consultant, Winnetka.

Paul Simon, director, The Public Policy Institute, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

Wim Wiewel, dean, College of Business

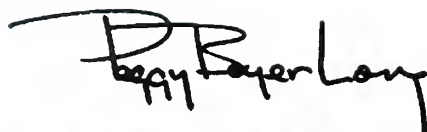
Administration, University of Illinois at Chicago.

Ed Wojcicki, ex officio.

MEMBERS EMERITUS

(years served on board in parentheses)

James L. Fletcher (1983-2000), William C. Harris (1986-93), David Kenney (1978-90), Louis H. Masotti (1978-92), James T. Otis (1975-94), David J. Paulus (1988-94), Carl Shier (1978-87).




An Illinois photographer captures the beauty of the Midwest's landscape

by Peggy Boyer Long

Ask central Illinois photographer Larry Kanfer what he can possibly find in this flat and seemingly empty landscape and, like any true Midwesterner, he'll talk about the history of towns, the cycle of seasons and, of course, the significance of weather.

In awe-inspiring detail. The first thaw? That's usually January 20 or so, when a bit of black earth shows through the snow and there's a slight scent of spring in the air. Never mind that February will then seem as unending as the horizon. Spring is a certainty. So are summer and fall.

Kanfer, whose photographs appear on the cover and on pages 18 through 25, makes his living by paying attention to this kind of detail. And, though not a life-long Midwesterner, he has become a close observer of other folks whose livelihoods are grounded, over generations, in rural towns and farmsteads.

"The farmers have worked, year in, year out, every day on the same plot of land," he says. "They know intimately what the soil type is, they know the seasons, they know the repetition. They can almost sense when a front is coming through. And how do they do that? My job is to try and figure out

what signals they get to understand the land."

He's philosophically suited to the task. "Living in the middle of a city, there's a whole element that you're missing in life," he says.

"I personally need a sense of the sun moving throughout the seasons, from rising in the northeast to rising in the southeast. There's the timeline, the progression that is really important."

As it happens, Kanfer was born in the Midwest, in St. Louis, but he spent his early years in the Pacific Northwest, which has an obvious, what he calls "vertical," beauty. After high school, he moved to Illinois, where he discovered a "chronological" beauty that must be experienced over time.

That insight, it turns out, is the theme of our sixth annual arts issue. From Chicago to the southern tip of the state, artists help us to see in new ways the landscape and the people of Illinois. Lucky for us, Kanfer agreed to let us use some of his photographs.

Kanfer owns galleries in Champaign and in Minneapolis, Minn. He has put out three books of Midwestern landscape photography: *Prairiescapes*; *On Second Glance*; and, his most recent, *On Firm Ground*, which was

Publisher: Edward R. Wojcicki

Editor: Peggy Boyer Long

Editor emeritus: William L. Day

Circulation &

marketing manager: Charlene Lambert

Assistant to the publisher: Quincy Grimes

Business manager: Chris Ryan

Statehouse bureau chief: Aaron Chambers

Projects editor: Maureen F. McKinney

Associate editor: Beverley Scobell

Contributing editor: Rodd Whelpley

Art director: Diana Nelson

Columnists: Robert Davis

Madeleine Doubek

Patrick E. Gauen

Charles N. Wheeler III

Graduate assistant: Ryan Reeves

Editorial assistant: Debi Edmund

issued this year. All three were published by the University of Illinois Press.

Some 1,500 of his photographic images also can be seen on his home page at www.kanfer.com. These images are searchable by key word.

This is a substantial body of work for someone who said he would give photography a year to see how it went. That was in 1978, after Kanfer received his degree in architecture from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Architecture, it turns out, provided good technical and conceptual training for the photographic arts. That's because, Kanfer says, an architect has to be able to think through what he's trying to communicate. When he photographs, he does the same. He tries to think about getting his point across.

His vision of the Midwest? "Optimism. Growth over time. And the fact that we, as a group of Midwesterners and Illinoisans, have worked together to build this civilization. We've got these beautiful little towns that have sprung up, perfectly spaced across the countryside.

"Where better to see it than here where it's flat." □

Illinois Issues

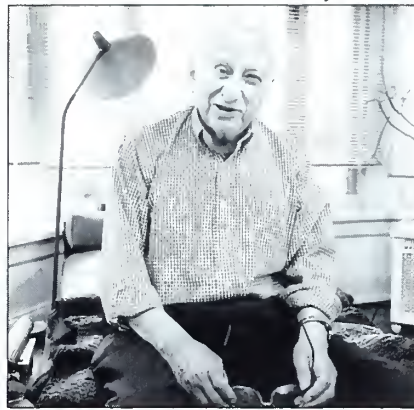
A publication of the University of Illinois at Springfield

December 2001

Volume XXVII, No. 12



Mixed message, page 14



History from the bottom up, page 30



Art and community, page 27

FEATURES

14 Mixed message

by Daniel C. Vock

What impression of the capital city does Springfield want to convey? Officials haven't asked that question in decades. The results are all too visible.

18 Imagine Illinois

Art reflects the landscape and the people.

Photos by Larry Kanfer

23 Dream deferred

by Maureen F. McKinney

A little Illinois town goes all out to honor a politician who passed through, but has been slow to recognize the writers who called it home.

27 Art and community

by Curtis Lawrence

An affordable artist colony for half a century, Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood is on the rise. But as the rents go up, the artists are moving out.

30 History from the bottom up

by Aaron Chambers

Using Chicago as a microcosm, Studs Terkel has helped define America, with all its divisions and unions.

34 Guest essay

The art of revitalization

by Hilary A. Frost-Kumpf

DEPARTMENTS

3 Conversation with the Publisher

by Ed Wojcicki

4 Editor's Notebook

by Peggy Boyer Long

6 State of the State

by Aaron Chambers
Art helps kids cope.

8 Briefly

35 People

36 Letters

37 A View from the Suburbs

by Madeleine Doubek
Art and culture abound.

38 Politics

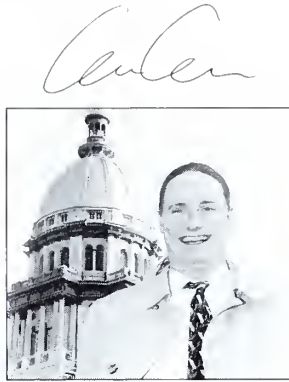
by Charles N. Wheeler III
GOP turns to popular culture.

Credits: The photographs on our cover, "University and Prospect Winter" and "Frozen in Time," were taken by Larry Kanfer.

Editorial and business office: HRB 10, University of Illinois at Springfield, P.O. Box 19243, Springfield, IL 62794-9243. Telephone: 217-206-6084. Fax: 217-206-7257. E-mail: illinoisissues@uis.edu. E-mail publisher: wojcicki@uis.edu. E-mail editor: boyer-long.peggy@uis.edu. **Subscription questions:** Illinois Issues, Subscription Division, P.O. Box 7263, Bensenville, IL 60106 or call 1-800-508-0266. Hours are 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Central Time, Monday-Friday (except holidays). **Subscriptions:** \$39.95 one year/ \$72 two years/ \$105 three years; student rate is \$20 a year. Individual copy is \$3.95. Back issue is \$5. *Illinois Issues* is indexed in the PAIS Bulletin and is available electronically on our home page: <http://illinoisissues@uis.edu>. *Illinois Issues* (ISSN 0738-9663) is published monthly, except during the summer when July and August are combined. Periodical postage paid at Springfield, IL, and additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to *Illinois Issues*, Subscription Division, P.O. Box 7263, Bensenville, IL 60106.

©2001 by Illinois Issues, University of Illinois at Springfield, P.O. Box 19243, Springfield, IL 62794-9243. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without prior written permission is prohibited.

Illinois Issues is published by the University of Illinois at Springfield. In addition to university support and subscription income, the magazine is supported by grants and donations. The contents of the magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the university or the donors.



Art is helping kids cope with the September 11 tragedy

by Aaron Chambers

Buddy the dog split New York City after the September 11 terrorist attacks. He was scared and ran to Springfield for comfort.

That's how a group of Springfield-area children first depicted their feelings about the attacks. It was four days after the incident, and the children, ages 8 to 11, thought the golden retriever would be better off in their hometown. They were gathered at the capital city's airport to talk about their thoughts, and to put them into fiction. Their assignment: Write a book that would be illustrated and sold to other children.

"The early part of it was just being scared: 'We've got to get away,'" says Delores Palmer, president of WeWrite Corp., the Springfield-based publishing company that ran the workshop. "That in itself is reflecting the process of coping. You're running."

But the children soon moved on. At their second workshop, held about a week later, the children changed the story line. This time, Buddy returned to New York after staying a year in Springfield.

And during their third and final meeting on the book, held about a month after the attacks, the children dropped Springfield from the picture. They had Buddy stay in New York, where he regroups and tries to help with relief efforts.

He travels the city with his owner,

Shelly, after they're evacuated from her apartment. Along the way, Buddy talks with other dogs, including a police dog, about the tasks they perform in the aftermath.

The two end up staying at a shelter, where Buddy decides he can help matters by playing with children, distracting them from watching television, and by comforting people separated from family. In the end, Buddy ventures to the attack site, where he fetches food and water for other dogs searching for victims in the rubble.

"The basic message of the story is that through everything that's going on, you can try to help fix the situation by being part of this team that's trying to remedy the whole thing," says Jacqueline Goodwin, director of creative services at WeWrite. "There are so many things that you can do, even if you're not a fire dog or a police dog or a military dog. If you're a normal dog, or a child, there are little things that you can do to help, and that makes you feel better."

The story is an extraordinary example of art created by kids working to cope with grief after a tragedy; children generally don't create such a complex product as part of art therapy. Still, those children are not alone in their efforts.

Across the state, children are using art to deal with emotions related to the

terrorist attacks. They're drawing, painting, sculpting, writing and acting. It's happening in schools, at private art centers and in workshops, such as the one conducted by WeWrite.

As a result, the kids learn to articulate, and to deal with, their thoughts and feelings. They develop their imaginations. And they learn to communicate with each other.

"In troubling times, art can be used as a therapy," says Rhoda Pierce, executive director of the Illinois Arts Council. "Sometimes, when something tragic happens, children may not be able to express their feelings in words, but they often can alleviate their sorrow through drawing, through music, through dancing."

Elaine Steiner knows all about that. As assistant principal at Hitch Elementary School on Chicago's north-west side, she feared her students weren't sufficiently dealing with feelings related to the attacks, and she thought they should begin a dialogue.

The school gave each of about 350 students a square of cardboard, and asked them to draw or write about their thoughts on the attacks. One student drew an eagle in tears. Another drew the World Trade Center towers with a heart around them.

Parents sewed the squares together with red, white and blue yarn, and the school had the quilt laminated. It's about 10 feet high and 12 feet wide.

"I think, unfortunately, children are not allowed to communicate as much as they should be, so I think it's good for them to get the feelings out," Steiner says. "I don't think people listen to the kids enough. Adults don't have time; parents don't have time a lot of the time because they are working and they don't sit down and talk to their kids and they don't listen to them."

Across town, staff at the Hyde Park Art Center had the same idea: Give children a forum to vent about the attacks. The South Side group opened its doors for an afternoon and offered a free workshop to children ages 6 to 11.

The kids were asked to take images from news magazines, stuffed with coverage of the attacks, and build a collage. They were asked to depict how

they felt about the event, what they were thinking and what impressions they were left with.

Next, they performed a similar exercise on fresh paper. But this time they worked with magazines covering events not related to the attacks, such as *National Geographic*, and were asked to illustrate what the world could or should do to move toward a better future.

Finally, the children were asked to talk about their work.

"They couldn't fully articulate what exactly they were feeling, but you could clearly see it in the images," says Eliza Duenow, the center's education director. "Even if they were stumbling through sentences or stuttering, as a confused 7-year-old does, saying, 'The plane crashed, and there was the fire, and Bush was very angry and everyone was scared,' you could tell what was sticking in them. And then they talked to each other about that: 'Oh, I saw Bush mad too' or 'I saw the plane crash.'"

She says the contrast between the two collages was startling. One of the children, an 11-year-old girl, chose gray, smoke-colored images for the first exercise. In the second exercise, she used parts of bright commercial advertising, abstractions from art magazines and wilderness shots.

"She said simply that this is her art piece, that she liked making art because it made her happy, and that she liked this picture much better," Duenow says.

Paula Kowalczyk, development director at Street-Level Youth Media, works with older, more sophisticated youth. But on the afternoon of September 11, they nevertheless showed up at the nonprofit media arts agency, which offers kids access to technology, in search of an outlet for their emotions. They came straight from school, feeling scared, and wanted to talk. So, utilizing the center's video cameras, they started

talking and filming each other.

"It's an ongoing struggle: 'Should they be afraid, should they not be afraid?'" Kowalczyk says. "But I think it's definitely helpful to talk about your feelings in situations like this. It's hard when the adults here were also feeling afraid or in shock, so it was a process that we all went through together."

And when Traci Stanton showed up to teach an improvisation class to teenagers the Sunday immediately following the attacks, she says she had her work cut out for her in trying to motivate the students to act. They were exhausted, she says, and felt uncomfortable moving through different roles.

"At first, it's almost as if you didn't want to do it," she says. "You're afraid to laugh, you're afraid to be funny. You felt like you shouldn't be, that maybe

Photograph courtesy of the Hyde Park Art Center



The children at the Hyde Park Art Center made a collage that expresses their feelings about the September 11 terrorist attacks.

you should still be sad. You know, is it really fair that I'm laughing when all these people just lost their lives?"

But in time, she says, the students rose to the occasion. Improv can be therapeutic, she says, because students are encouraged to be creative while following their true feelings.

"You don't have to do what your boss says or be happy for the sake of the company," she says. "You can be upset in a scene if you want to be upset, or you can be happy if you want to be happy. You get to pretend, but you don't have to put that game face on."

Back downstate, Nan Carlson is an

art therapist and is education coordinator at the University Galleries of Illinois State University in Normal. After the attacks, she says, she wondered whether art teachers in high schools around the university were pushing their students to work out their feelings in class. She made some phone calls and asked the schools to send over whatever art had been produced.

She was overwhelmed by the response. One group of students showed up with a model of the Statue of Liberty, eight feet tall and four feet wide, which was plastered with media images related to the attacks.

Another student produced a cigar box with an orange interior and strings wrapped around it. "The student made a statement, saying basically that we need hope, that the strings represent different

facets of who we are and how we come together as a community," she says.

In October, Carlson co-curated a two-week exhibition featuring September 11-inspired art by students in the McLean County area. The work was juxtaposed by "professional" art in the university's galleries, which are geared toward adults. And if adult visitors to the exhibition were paying attention, she says, they stood to learn something about themselves.

"If you're a person who chooses to say 'kids are kids and they don't know

what they're talking about,' you're not going to take it in: you're not going to take what they have to say seriously," she says. "But if you are an open and perceptive adult, you have the opportunity to take in the perspective of a person who's in a vulnerable position. Children are really at the mercy of what adults say and do."

As for Buddy the dog, WeWrite, the publishing company that has been funding the project, plans to release the book, *War? I'm Scared!*, early this month. It looks like Buddy will spend some time around Springfield after all. □

BRIEFLY

Photograph courtesy of Terry Farmer Photography



Karen Lynne Deal is music director of the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, which plays in Springfield and Bloomington-Normal.

Play on

Smaller symphonies create strategies for survival

If music be the fruit of love, play on," Shakespeare wrote. Symphonies across the state might add, "If you have the funding and audience to do so."

In fact, getting people into concert halls has become an all-too-common struggle.

Nationally, the future of symphony orchestras doesn't look promising. California's 123-year-old San Jose Symphony has suspended artistic operations "until funding is available." The St. Louis Symphony has announced that it needs, at present, \$69 million to be fiscally secure. Closer to home, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra has discontinued its local and national radio broadcasts, closed its ECHO music education center and posted a \$1.3 million deficit.

In short, the larger orchestras here and in other regions of the nation are reeling. That should be the case, too, for the orchestras operating on smaller budgets. But here in Illinois, at least, there's surprising optimism among those who

oversee some of the smaller community symphonies.

"If we do our job right, the audience will establish a familial relationship with us," argues Karen Lynne Deal, music director of the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, which plays in Springfield and Bloomington-Normal.

Strategies for establishing that musical family vary, though.

Deal, who is relatively new to the ISO, has concentrated on the need to nurture a younger audience. She left a position as associate conductor of the Nashville Symphony Orchestra, which had a budget of \$9 million to \$10 million, to come to Springfield, which has a budget of just over \$1 million. She believes Illinois symphonies with small budgets like hers might profit from considering Shakespeare's words, "play on," in a new light.

By attracting younger audiences, then keeping them for a lifetime, symphonies could ensure their own future. So Deal and the ISO are attempting to attract an atypical audience into the concert hall. The traditional symphony fan is between the ages of 40 and 60. But Deal has added a "Sneakers and Jeans Family Matinee Series," an attempt to include children. The symphony hopes families will be more willing to attend if they don't have to dress or behave as they tradi-

tionally do for the more formal masterworks performances. Part of the event's informality is that the conductor doesn't maintain the standard silence. Instead, she speaks with the audience at length about the compositions they came to hear. The matinees' focus is symphonic education through pieces arranged for children, and, sometimes, by children. Deal even allows children to conduct and sing along with the orchestra throughout the concerts.

Not all conductors believe the future of Illinois' symphonies runs in blood quite so young. Steve Larsen, music director of both the Rockford and the Champaign-Urbana symphony orchestras, says the typical audience member for his concerts "tends to be older." In fact, Larsen thinks the ideal age is 45, "and I don't make any apologies in looking to that demographic." Instead, Larsen seeks out this audience "because it's reached an age where people have disposable income, time, the kids are in college, and they are at a point in their lives where they want to experiment a little." He acknowledges that people listen to music for different reasons, but maintains that most young people listen for nonmusical reasons. Instead of being purely musically driven, Larsen argues that younger audiences' interests in music are socially driven. "It's a different society."

As music director of two symphonies, Larsen must cater to separate and distinct audiences. "In Rockford, we can do musically whatever, whenever we want, but in Champaign-Urbana we have to find our niche."

The Rockford Symphony Orchestra, like many of the state's symphonic organizations outside of Chicago, is the city's only organization offering a classical repertoire.

Champaign, as a university city, is different in that, at any given time, Larsen must compete in his musical arrangements with five other classical groups. This competition includes such orchestras as the BBC Concert Orchestra of London and the Philadelphia Orchestra, both involved in the Marquee Great Hall Series at the University of Illinois' Krannert Center,

as well as B.A.C.H., or the Baroque Artists of Champaign-Urbana.

Champaign also has the distinction of celebrating a smaller fiscal deficit than in the past. According to Sue Crawford, the symphony's general manager, the deficit seven years ago totaled nearly \$25,000. After hiring a new board of directors and Larsen, the deficit shrank to approximately \$6,000. "We're certainly not in the black, but we're not adding on anything we can't raise the money for. You hope to break even and if you make a little extra that's great," Crawford says. She also is quick to note that programming has helped generate audience support.

Although they might disagree on their respective demographic targets, Larsen and Deal have chosen to take a hands-on approach to attracting new audiences. In Champaign, a "Symphony at Sunset" held in one of the city's parks, two pops concerts and even youth concerts were added. In Rockford, musicians are going into schools to educate children about the symphony's instruments and music. Larsen's reasoning behind the youth concerts is that the symphony is not attempting to get children into the concerts as much as the symphony is trying to "fill a gap" in education.

"Kids are not being taught symphonic music in schools, and we offer them an opportunity to fill in the gap themselves."

Edward Benyas would agree with Larsen's approach to education. Benyas is an assistant professor of music at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and the music director of the Southern Illinois Symphony Orchestra. Though they are "the only game in town," meaning the only symphony within an hour and a half's driving distance, Benyas is not seeing as many college students in the audience as he'd like. The symphony's musicians are primarily university students and faculty. Accordingly, Benyas aims to direct the symphony as an introduction to the standard musical repertoire. But he recognizes that entertainment and education go hand in hand.

Like other organizations, the symphony has added a pops concert to its program in an attempt to bolster

audience numbers. But Benyas only gives the concert slot up grudgingly. "I hate to use one of my only seasonal programs for a pops program," he says.

Rather, his efforts to increase numbers centers on the symphony itself. Recently, Benyas oversaw the performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, which involved approximately 180 symphony and choir members. He contends that by giving more involved performances, the symphony reaches out to the community, thereby expanding its audience. "We want to entertain the audience because they want a good cultural item in their community," says Benyas. "They hunger for it."

But Benyas has greater freedom than most music directors. "I have the university structure to fall back upon."

Other symphonies have to watch their budgets with greater ardor. Larsen puts the dilemma into perspective: "All artistic decisions flow from money. If you're strapped for cash, you can't be creative." Deal concentrates on the dollar signs as well. She says that a symphony's staff "needs to be a kind of evangelist. You make people feel good about donating and tell them where the money is going to." Without an expanding and supportive audience, the evangelist is left without a congregation.

If Deal's orchestra is any indication of the public's attitude, the congregation does appear to be listening. The executive director of the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, Maureen Earley, says the symphony has met 96 percent of its expected season ticket sales this year.

Deal's notion of establishing "a familial relationship" is a common theme of this state's symphonies. Their intent is an intimate, shared community, whether its members are playing or listening. Perhaps the music director of the Peoria Symphony Orchestra, David Commanday, says it best: "Every performance has to be vital, and God help you if you don't deliver something that plays to the human heart."

Ryan Reeves

Illinois' smaller museums keep an eye on Springfield

Illinois tourism venues, including the state's flagship museums, may be suffering in the wake of the September 11 terrorism attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., but the Land of Lincoln's smaller museums appear to have escaped the financial fallout so far.

The Springfield-based Illinois Association of Museums, which has spent the last four years raising the profile of the state's 854 known museums, believes smaller museums are somewhat insulated because their security lies not in tourism but in their base communities.

"My gut response is that smaller museums probably will be affected less than large ones," says association spokeswoman Mary Turner. "Most people visiting Chicago's Field Museum probably do not live within

five miles, while most visitors to the Macon County Historical Society in Decatur probably live within 50 miles.

Turner says she isn't certain yet what the ramifications will be from any change in tourism or in state museum funding. "If the state cuts back on the funding, though, that will hurt some smaller museums. Most do not depend on state funding, but cuts in [that] funding could mean cuts in their education programs."

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources has been processing applications for this year's state museum grants. Last fall, 80 museums shared \$5 million in operating grants and 45 shared \$10 million in construction grants. The same dollar amount has been appropriated this year by lawmakers and the governor, says department spokesman Tim Schweizer. But they are expected to cut the state budget in the middle of the fiscal year because the national recession has lowered state revenues.

The state museum grants, themselves only three years old, subsidize museums located on public property. The operating grants go to museums with annual attendance of at least 150,000 who hold education programs during school hours. The grants are based on museums' operating expenses. Construction grants reimburse museums for up to a third of the cost of construction, renovation or other improvements.

Meanwhile, the association aims to continue trying to raise its profile, Turner says, building on the progress made in 1998, when it conducted the first comprehensive survey of the state's museums and went on to win approval of a state law on the disposition of museum property. The law now spells out a procedure for museums that want to permanently acquire or dispose of objects for which they have no documentation, including loaned items whose owners have not reclaimed them.

Turner says the association needs to conduct another survey of its members, about 30 percent of which responded to the initial survey. Among the revelations:

- more than 97 percent are not-for-profit, 37 percent are publicly operated and 25 percent have collections numbering 10,000 to 100,000 pieces;
- three-quarters are small with operating budgets of \$250,000 a year or less, 17 percent are midsized with budgets of \$250,000 to \$500,000 and less than 7 percent are large with budgets of \$1 million or more;
- the most common sources of revenues are donations, gift shop sales and fund-raising events, with more than 60 percent receiving up to 40 percent of their revenues from donations, sales and grants;
- many receive local property tax revenue, but few benefit from the state hotel-motel tax or horse racing and riverboat gambling.

Many Illinois museums are discovering "their importance in their niche," Turner says. She cites Murphysboro's General John A. Logan Museum, which honors the Civil War soldier who became a U.S. senator; Danville's Vermilion County Museum Society, which is expanding its home in the historic Joseph Cannon House; and Chicago's "very active" Southeast Historic Society, which represents four city neighborhoods.

The challenge for the association may be to produce the latest statistics on the "niche" smaller museums have carved in Illinois before next spring, when the legislature and governor settle on a state budget for the coming fiscal year.

Diane Ross

Statehouse News Service, Springfield

e-Government Solutions...

...for good government today.

It's not just the Internet - it's the public interest.

We deliver solutions that re-invent public services, integrate with existing systems, and secure private data. Our services include:

- Project Management
- Internet & E-Commerce
- Architecture Design
- Security & Performance
- Back-end Systems Integration
- Full Life-Cycle Development



Chicago Systems Group
Our Experience Is Our Strength

www.ChicagoSystemsGroup.com

Mr. Tim Lenning, Director - E-Government
312.423.2111 or
TLenning@ChicagoSystemsGroup.com

Humanities grant helps the mathematical arts

A group of elementary schoolgirls from Chicago's Cabrini Green neighborhood love mathematics. And they express their passion in a number of artistic ways: drawings, paintings and drama.

"We hadn't projected this result of their studies, but we are delighted by it," says Connie VanBrunt, coordinator of a community-based program called CYCLE (Community Youth Creative Learning Experience), based in the public housing complex.

With the support of a state grant, the guidance of a college history professor and the help of a group of high school girls from the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, the girls are working on a project that will culminate in an illustrated book about the lives of two prominent mathematicians, one an 18th century French woman and the other a 20th century African-American woman.

"The girls became interested in the life and work of Sophie Germain, and questioned why it was so hard for her to study math," says Rima Schultz, an adjunct professor of history at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, who guides the girls in the study of biographies. The idea is to understand the goals of mathematicians in particular and women in general.

Through a start-up grant from the Illinois Humanities Council, the CYCLE program is helping 78 girls find inspiration through the study of two mathematicians who fought long odds: Germain and Evelyn Boyd Granville, an African-American woman who received a doctorate degree in theoretical mathematics from Yale University in 1949. Schultz, who, with Adele Hast, edited *Women Building Chicago 1790-1990*, a biographical dictionary published last August, will continue to guide the Cabrini-Green girls through the process of "thinking historically" as they work on their project.

"The humanities grant allowed us to have the guidance of a historian, but [the math and science academy] has been a true partner," says VanBrunt.

Eleven girls from the academy in Aurora travel to Cabrini-Green every Wednesday to help with research on

Germain and Granville.

The high school girls also will work on their own project, developing a mathematics curriculum for elementary teachers that will trace Germain's study of math.

Germain is famous for being the first to solve one of the challenges of the 18th-century math world, Fermat's Last Theorem. She developed a theory based on prime numbers, called Germain's primes, used by mathematicians ever since.

Granville, who grew up in poverty and suffered discrimination as a woman and an African American, called math the "great equalizer." In addition to teaching, she worked on the Project Vanguard and Project Mercury space programs, analyzing orbits and developing computer procedures, including making "real-time" calculations during satellite launchings.

Beverley Scobell

U of C professor wins award

Robert Pippin, a University of Chicago philosophy professor and chairman of the college's Committee on Social Thought, won a \$1.5 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Citing his "profound reinterpretation of the conceptual bases of modern thought," the New York-based foundation chose Pippin as one of five recipients of the Mellon Distinguished Achievement Award.

Pippin will use some of the money to continue work on German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's theory of freedom and Friedrich Nietzsche's misgivings about modern democratic society. He also is working on a book on late 19th- and early 20th-century art. The award, which will be paid over three years, will go to the university to support Pippin's salary and benefits, with the rest going to research.

Beverley Scobell

WORKSHOP

ILLINOIS LEGISLATIVE STUDIES CENTER
presents

The Illinois Legislative Process: The Basics and Beyond

The Illinois Legislative Process: The Basics and Beyond is a day-long workshop on how law gets made in Illinois, and how to work effectively in and around the General Assembly. The staff of the Illinois Legislative Studies Center will provide basic information on Illinois politics and General Assembly operations, and more advanced information on the budget process, lobbying, legislative resources, and more.

Friday, January 25, 8am-4pm

at the University of Illinois at Springfield,
Public Affairs Center, Conference Room C/D

Who Should Attend: Anyone who needs to know how the Illinois General Assembly works and how to work with it:
• Prospective lobbyists and governmental affairs representatives
• Advocates in the not-for-profit and local government sectors
• Interested citizens

\$175.

TO REGISTER CONTACT:

Lorrie Farrington, Illinois Legislative Studies Center
phone (217) 206-6574 fax (217) 206-6542 email ILSC@UIS.EDU

BRIEFLY

ROLL ON

Art tells the story of life along the river

The Mississippi River has always been a central character in Illinois' history and culture. But now the Illinois Arts Council intends to take a closer look at Illinoisans' relationship to the river that forms the state's western border.

The council plans to use contemporary and traditional art forms to tell the stories of the people who live and work along the river.

"This is the first time there has been such a multifaceted coordinated effort to research the arts and culture of the Illinois Mississippi River Valley encompassing the region from Galena to Cairo," says project coordinator Sue Eleuterio, director of ethnic and folk arts for the council.

The project, funded by a \$40,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and a matching \$20,000 grant from the state, aims to reach the rural and underserved communities in western Illinois. Names gathered in a fall survey of regional artists and art forms will be entered into a database and then gathered into a teacher's guide the council will distribute statewide. Some of the artists will serve residencies in schools and community organizations.

"There has been a rich tradition of Mississippi River arts in many disciplines that are treasures in their own right and deserve to be preserved and recognized for their valuable contribution to our history and to the arts," says Rhoda Pierce, executive director of the council. This project, she says, is one "whose time has come as we reclaim our Mississippi River heritage and make it a part of our everyday culture."

Beverly Scobell

Photograph by Chris Vallillo,
a community scholar for the IAC Illinois Mississippi River Valley Project



Bob Kehl, a member of the Big River Carvers Club, is restoring a wooden horse from the carousel that originally operated on Quinsippi Island in the Mississippi River near Quincy.

Illinois journalists win national awards

Illinois Issues magazine and three of Illinois' Statehouse reporters were among those recognized last month by the national Association of Capitol Reporters and Editors at that group's annual conference in Sacramento, Calif.

John O'Connor of The Associated Press won first place for Statehouse beat reporting in the Online/Wire Service category; Eva Goltermann of the Illinois Radio Network won in radio beat reporting; and Victoria Langle, formerly with WICS-TV in Springfield, won for television beat reporting. *Illinois Issues* was cited by ACRE for "outstanding work in state government journalism." Judging was performed by members of the Poynter Institute, a journalism research and training center in St. Petersburg, Fla.

ACRE is a young organization of journalists dedicated to supporting superb coverage of state government throughout the nation. It has members in more than 40 states.

What In The World Is Going On?

Find out when you tune in to
National Public Radio's
award-winning news programs on
your public radio station
WIUM 91.3 FM Macomb/
WIUW 89.5 FM Warsaw-Keokuk

Morning Edition 5:00-9:00 a.m.
All Things Considered 5:00-7:00 p.m.

WIUM 91.3 fm
WIUW 89.5 fm

Arts Across Illinois

Najjar Abdul-Musawwir, who paints vivid scenes inspired by his Muslim/African-American heritage, is one of the artists featured in the first of three prime-time half-hour specials called *Arts Across Illinois* that will air on WTTW 11 and other public television stations this winter.

Abdul-Musawwir, an art and art history lecturer at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, shares the southern Illinois segment with actor Bob Streit Jr., who performs excerpts from his one-man show on life in that part of the state, and a visit to "September Night," an annual arts festival that showcases the work of a wide range of artists from Carbondale.

The southern Illinois segment just scratches the surface of entertainment. In all, more than 30 working artists and groups supported by state grants from the Illinois Arts Council are featured in the series. The first show, which airs again on January 17 (the first airing was in November) and on March 21 on

WTTW 11 will feature Rockford artists Robert and Marlene McCauley, as well as a tour of the annual gallery walk, the "Rockford ArtScene" and the newly refurbished 1927 Coronado Theatre.

The show visits the Chinquapin Folk Music & Storytelling Festival outside Peoria, which features local musicians and folk artists.

In Chicago, the founder and director of the Natya Dance Theater, Hema Rajagopalan, explains the intricacies of learning Indian dances and the religious meaning behind them. Rap and hiphop is covered in a visit to the annual Musicality of Poetry Festival, which features the work of Jamaican rap artists Mutabaruka and Cherry Natural. The host of the series, Bob Sirott, interviews the local rap duo, All Natural.

Arts Across America first featured Illinois artists in a three-part series that ran last summer. The show was so well received, says Illinois Arts Council spokeswoman Ann Ridge, they partnered with WTTW 11 again to feature more artists. This series will end, as did the first, with a one-hour live broadcast

entitled *CenterStage*. That airing is yet to be announced. The series is available to public television stations across the state.

Beverley Scobell

Update

John Wesley Powell finally has a statue in Illinois. Essayist Robert Kuhn McGregor (see *Illinois Issues*, July, page 30) noted that "there are no monuments to Powell anywhere" and called him "Illinois' forgotten son." But soon Powell will be remembered in a bronze statue to be located in the rotunda of the new Ames Library being built on the campus of Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington.

The sculpture depicts a seated Powell with maps symbolizing the western territories he explored. The accompanying plaque reads in part: "John Wesley Powell, Civil War hero, alumnus, geologist & ethnographer to a nation; professor of natural sciences, 1865-1868; creator of a tradition of research and exploration."

Beverley Scobell

What are Illinois newspapers saying about you?

There are more than 600 newspapers in Illinois, with thousands of stories every week on every topic imaginable.

No one can read all of those newspapers.

But the Illinois Press Clipping Bureau offers an affordable way to find out what newspapers are saying on any subject in Illinois.

For just \$55 per month and 55 cents per article, the Illinois Press Clipping Bureau will monitor as many subjects and names as you select. We're so sure that you will like our service that the Illinois Press Clipping Bureau is offering to monitor any topics or names for 30 days — free of charge — just so you can see for yourself just how hard we work.

For more information, call us today at (217) 241-1400 and ask for Shari Mulvany or Lisa Sisti. Or send an e-mail inquiry to smulvany@il-press.com or lsisti@il-press.com.

illinois
press
clipping
bureau





Visitors who look southwest from the new library and museum (top photograph) will see the nearby maroon-and-cream rotunda of the Old State Capitol. Telescoped on the skyline behind it, they'll see the silver-topped dome of the current Statehouse.

Mixed message

What impression of the capital city does Springfield want to convey? Officials haven't asked that question in decades. The results are all too visible

Analysis by Daniel C. Vock
Photographs by Diana L.C. Nelson

The steel skeleton rising at the northeast edge of downtown is motivating Springfield leaders to think about how they want to present their city to visitors who come to see Abraham Lincoln's hometown and the seat of Illinois government.

They don't have much time to hone this belated message. A year from now, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, which will house 46,000 items from this state's Lincoln collection, is scheduled to open. A year after that, an accompanying museum is slated to offer multimedia presentations and walk-through exhibits of Lincoln's life. The estimated cost of the entire project is \$115 million in local, state and federal dollars. That adds up to a major political coup — years in the making — and an urban planning challenge for this staid central Illinois town of some 100,000 residents.

The complex will dominate and define the area where Lincoln rose from prairie lawyer to president. Three downtown blocks will be dedicated to the project, which is expected to draw at least 500,000 visitors a year. Those who look southwest from the new library and museum will see the nearby maroon-and-cream rotunda of the Old State Capitol. Telescoped on the skyline behind it, they'll see the silver-topped dome of the current Statehouse. These monuments define the landscape of Lincoln's hometown. They also frame a visitor's understanding of the state and its legacy. This city is, after all, where



The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Lincoln spent most of his adult life and rose to national prominence. And Springfield has served as the stage for Illinois politics for more than a century and a half.

But the addition of a marquee attraction means city leaders face a question they haven't examined thoroughly since the 1920s: What impression do they want to leave on the tourists, lobbyists and government officials who will come here? Everyone, it seems, has a different idea. The architect of the library and museum envisions wide-open spaces that would link sites of historical importance. Downtown merchants want to see tourists frequenting street-level restaurants and shops. Residents who live above those businesses foresee the restoration of a cityscape more akin to the Springfield Lincoln knew.

The heart of the city resembles none of these visions, thanks to decades of short-sighted development. In truth, Springfield has no overarching vision at all. It shows. Dilapidated

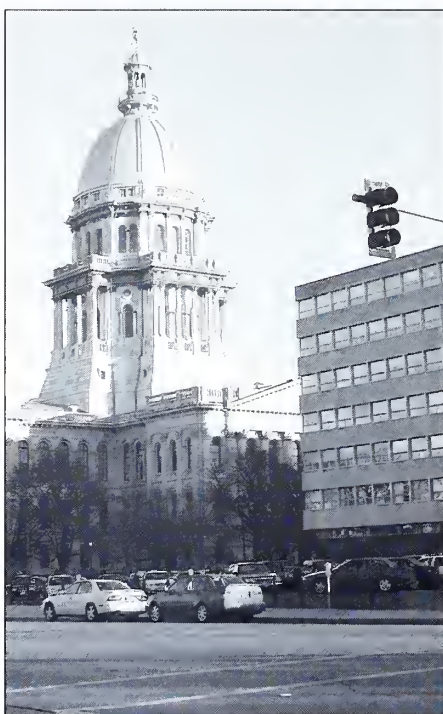
buildings and asphalt lots gobble up nearly entire city blocks. Storefronts stand empty, sometimes for years. Many structures are out of scale and out of place. Buildings constructed of terra cotta, steel and glass, limestone, brick or concrete line the streets, with little acknowledgement of their surroundings.

And that's just the downtown. To the west, the state government campus is separated from the historic area by railroad tracks and three blocks of what Springfield preservation developer Carolyn Oxtoby calls "very underdeveloped" buildings.

And the Capitol Complex sends a mixed message as well. It includes the 361-foot-tall Statehouse, a 19th century monument dominated by dozens of smooth columns topped with leafy Corinthian capitals. Across the street, draping garlands adorn the windows of the Supreme Court Building, while sculptures of such mythic figures as Lady Justice grace the outside of the beaux arts courthouse.

Some state buildings in the complex pick up on those classical themes, but others seem glaringly out of place with exteriors of glass and metal that lack reference to the buildings around them. Furthermore, the complex is besieged by surface lots on three sides, while a railroad viaduct obstructs the approach to the Capitol on the fourth.

The 1950s-era Stratton, a building with a layered exterior of glass and stone immediately to the west of the Capitol, later offended then-Secretary of State



The Statehouse campus is an eclectic mix of classical and 1950s-era architecture.

Jim Edgar so much that he studied the possibility of erecting a stone facade over it. The cost for that project proved too prohibitive. Nevertheless, Edgar says he was “emphatic” that the state library, which opened in 1990 across the street from the Capitol to the east, should be a classical building. “Maybe it was because I was a history major, a Republican and a traditionalist,” Edgar says. Whatever the reasons, Edgar says he insisted on the classic style even when others, including then-Gov. Jim Thompson, suggested something more modern.

Evoking the themes of Greek and Roman architecture at the Capitol Complex enhances the image of the state, Edgar contends. “It definitely adds a lot to the appearance as a symbol of the state. It looks like something people can be proud of.”

What about the rest of Springfield? Lincoln library and museum architect Gyo Obata says the problems extend well beyond the most high-profile areas of the city. He has repeatedly said the entryways to downtown from the Interstate need work. Most Springfield entry points, he notes, require visitors to pass through some of the city’s more blighted areas or through commercial areas lined with blaring billboards and poorly designed strip malls.

To their credit, local officials are motivated to consider these issues. Several groups, including the American Institute of Architects, are now assessing the scope of these challenges, at least in part because of conflicts over how best to integrate the presidential library with the rest of downtown. But city officials acknowledged the need for better planning even before those conflicts erupted.

A recent mayoral commission outlined what would be required to transform Springfield into a “presidential-class city.” It emphasized the need for foresight and cohesion. “Planning can help Springfield move from a time where decisions were made without a larger context or because they have always been made a certain way,” the Strategy 2020 commission concluded. The results of decisions made “without a larger context” are all too visible.

But improvements already are under

way. Barb Malany, the owner of a downtown flower shop and president of Downtown Springfield Inc., says one of the most successful steps was a joint effort by business owners and the city to improve the streetscape, the area between buildings and the streets. Cast-iron streetlights, benches and cobblestone now line several blocks in the heart of the city. Small touches, Malany says, can go a long way in bringing the area together. “I’m not sure the entire downtown has to match, but we can give it certain aspects that give it a certain cohesiveness.”

The benefits of these changes are evident along Sixth Street, the heart of downtown in the capital city. During lunch hour, pedestrians flow in and out of restaurants located in beautifully restored buildings that evoke the character of the city before the beginning of the 20th century. If they venture north, visitors will pass a pedestrian plaza, completed last year, before approaching the Old State Capitol. At the intersection of that plaza and Sixth Street is Lincoln’s former law office, a popular destination.

Of course, the Old State Capitol is where Lincoln served as a state lawmaker, where he argued before the Illinois Supreme Court and where he delivered his “House Divided” speech. The building is set back from the street on a landscaped lawn. That open space creates a departure from the buildings surrounding it, which are all flush with the sidewalk.

The original plats for Springfield show this square at the center of the new city. The courthouse was located there. When Springfield became the state capital, with an assist from Lincoln, it became the site of the Capitol. Thirty years ago, the state completely renovated the structure, spurring a renewed interest in downtown.

But immediately north of that square is an area that is at the center of a current heated controversy. Obata, the architect who designed the library complex, suggests razing the entire block between the Old State Capitol and Union Station to the north to create a Washington, D.C.-type mall that will tie these historic sites. Union Station, built in 1898, was designed by Francis Bacon,

the older brother of Henry Bacon, who designed the Lincoln Memorial at the end of the Mall in Washington, D.C. It will serve in any event as the visitors center for the library and museum.

Last May, Illinois House Minority Leader Lee Daniels successfully pushed for \$20 million in state funds to create the open vista, prompting a backlash from historic preservationists.

Historically significant buildings now sit on that would-be quadrangle. Further, clearing the block, some argue, would fundamentally change the nature of the square surrounding the Old State Capitol for the first time since the city was incorporated in 1832.

"If you take out the north wall, you make it a new city. This is not a museum setting, but the feel of the city was for the Old State Capitol to be surrounded," argues Oxtoby, who bought a building on the north edge of the square six years ago to prevent it from being demolished.

Facing the Old State Capitol are four small buildings, two of which are on the National Register of Historic Places. Next to them stands a five-story bank drawn up by the same architecture firm that designed the Sears Tower and the John Hancock Building. The outside of the bank is deliberately plain, a hulk of red, polished granite with bronzed glass windows.

In response to these new developments, local leaders hired an architecture firm to consider a host of options for the vista or to propose other ideas on ways to spend the state grant. Those options include razing the entire block, demolishing only the bank that dominates the block, moving the historically significant buildings or just leaving them. The Massachusetts firm, Sasaki Associates Inc., is expected to report back to the civic panel by the end of the year. Sasaki has conducted similar work on the Indiana Capitol Complex, on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C., and on the Urbana-Champaign campus of the University of Illinois.

Meanwhile, the American Institute of Architects announced in October that it had selected Springfield as one of the cities it will evaluate. The association will send its experts in economic revitalization, historic preservation, urban planning, transportation and, of course,

architecture to study the downtown once Sasaki completes its initial work. The AIA team will issue a "mini comprehensive plan," says Springfield city planner Jeremy Lochirco.

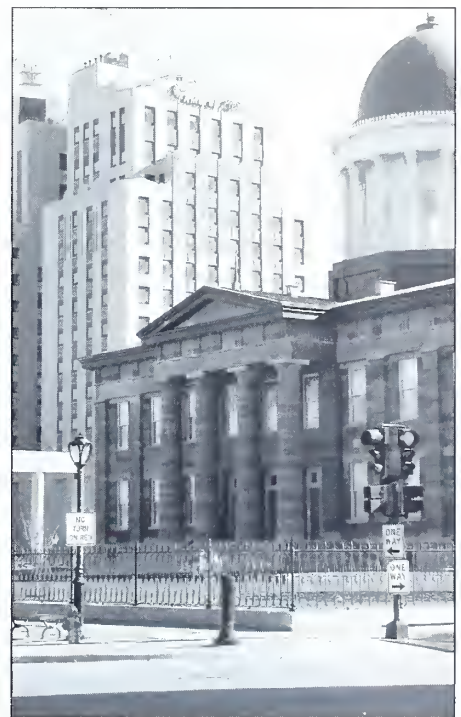
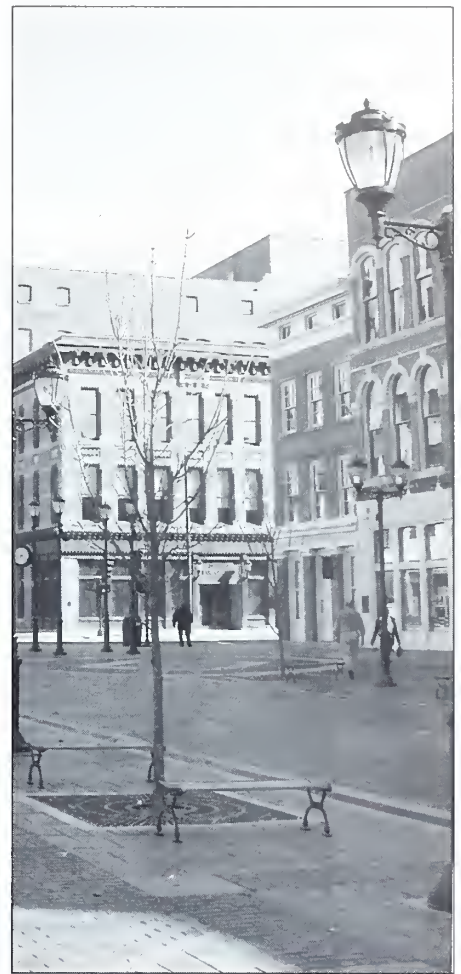
Obata, one of the founders of the architectural firm Hellmuth, Obata & Kassebaum, drew on disparate parts of the larger Springfield area for his design palate. Last month, he told the Illinois chapter of the AIA, which has its offices in the bank he proposes to raze, that he looked all over the city for inspiration. He cited both capitols, the Roman Catholic cathedral and Frank Lloyd Wright's Dana-Thomas House.

For example, he employs cylindrical shafts along the outside of both buildings. They are designed to resonate with the columns at the entryways and along the rotunda of the Old State Capitol, as well as the dominant neoclassical architecture of the Capitol Complex. But the limestone columns have been stripped of their fluted sides, capitals and much of their context, such as domes or entablatures, that give the motif its staying power. They do, however, match large, concrete columns outside another bank to the east of the Old State Capitol, which will have the effect of lining the better part of three blocks along Sixth Street with cylindrical shafts.

The design of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum does little on its own to evoke the memory of its namesake. Thus, much will depend on the context of the complex, which is to say that much will depend on the overall impression Springfield wants to convey.

The Strategy 2020 commission, which made suggestions for ways Springfield could be a "presidential-class" city, said attaining that goal would require a new approach to city planning. "Great cities do not just occur fortuitously," the panel wrote. "They have planned their greatness and aggressively implemented their plans. The leaders of great cities have demonstrated their foresight and their citizens have supported them." □

Daniel C. Vock is the Statehouse bureau chief for the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin. His most recent piece for Illinois Issues, about Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House, appeared in September.



A refurbished pedestrian plaza surrounding the Old State Capitol was completed last year.

Imagine Illinois

Art reflects the landscape and the people

Photographs by Larry Kanfer

It's not an easy beauty. Rather, it resides in nuance, in the steady cycle of the seasons, the certain chronology of renewal, the sure relationship of people with the land. The beauty of the Midwest, Larry Kanfer believes, must be experienced across time. But his challenge, over the past two decades and more, has been to convert these subtleties into two dimensions, to convey through photographic composition emotions embedded in the landscape. "Here is beauty as small as this dirt clod. Or as subtle as the completely flat, shaved field that apparently has nothing there but it's beautiful because there's something beyond the superficial." For Kanfer that something is the people who worked the earth, generation to generation. They aren't visible so much as implied. "I see," he says, "what people have created." And what he sees pulls the imagination into the frame. "I want the viewer to put themselves in that spot. I believe everyone can imagine sitting on a porch watching time go by." Kanfer's most recent book of photographs, *On Firm Ground*, was published this year by the University of Illinois Press. Some of the images in that book appear on the following pages.

The Editors



American View



May Tapestry



Trillium



Umbrella Stand



Fourth Season



Over the Edge



Valentine Woods



Rural Abstract



Guiding Light



Golden Autumn

Dream deferred

A little Illinois town goes all out to honor a politician who passed through, but has been slow to recognize the writers who called it home

by Maureen Foertsch McKinney
Photographs by Larry Kanfer

Telephone poles, train tracks and thick clumps of trees are the first signs that Old Route 66 is about to wind north into Lincoln. Once the highway crosses Salt Creek, clusters of roadside signs break the view. They announce that this central Illinois town of 15,400 is home to several high school athletic champions, the Lions and Kiwanis clubs and a host of churches. Others proclaim that, in state economic development lingo, Lincoln is not merely an Illinois Certified City, but a Main Street Community and an enterprise zone.

None of these signs report that Lincoln is the birthplace and favored setting of American Book Award winning novelist William Maxwell, or that Langston Hughes credited the community with identifying him as a poet long before his jazz- and blues-

infused poems and racially inspired works such as “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” would make him a central figure in the Harlem Renaissance — or that Reinhold Niebuhr, the influential theological scribe, was confirmed and ordained here. Or, for that matter, that one of the town’s dentists is arguably among the pre-eminent writers of haiku in the United States.

Visitors who get deeper into town, east of the county fairgrounds, beyond the Kroger, the Clark station and the Chopsticks Chinese restaurant, can see that Lincoln has at least acknowledged a bit of its literary heritage. At the corner of Union and Eighth streets stands what Lincoln Library Director Richard Sumrall calls a “huge” metal plaque. On it is inscribed the story of how in 1916 Langston Hughes wrote

his first poem at the end of his year as a student at Lincoln’s Central School.

William Maxwell also attended Central and lived in a house around the corner. Maxwell, fiction editor at *The New Yorker* for 40 years, set half of his six novels and many of his short stories and essays in Lincoln, but there’s no plaque for him at Central — nor is there one at the stucco house on Park Place that plays a central role in his novel, *So Long, See You Tomorrow*. Nor is there a historical marker at the house on Ninth Street where he was born in 1908. Not yet, anyway.

Collectively, the little town has long been more interested in its status as the only place to have been named for Abraham Lincoln before he went to the White House, and the lore that he christened the town with watermelon juice in 1853. Community historian



Harvest Station

Paul Gleason is assistant director of the Lincoln College Museum, where a few rooms store myriad artifacts, including letters signed by Lincoln, rails split by his cousin, a child-sized rocker into which Tad Lincoln carved TAD and pieces of the great emancipator's hair.

Gleason, a 63-year-old life-long resident of Lincoln, who serves on the Logan County Board and the local tourism bureau, stumbled across Hughes' Lincoln connection while researching his 1989 Logan County history, composed mainly from a seat at Hardees, where he does most of his writing. Once Lincoln resident Margaret Peifer, a former nun, got hold of that information she whipped up the interest to get that plaque erected in 1998, nearly 30 years after Hughes' death.

Maxwell's Lincoln connection is not so obscure. Consequently, plans are in the works to erect a historical marker at Maxwell's boyhood home, plans folks in Lincoln brought to the author's attention before his death in 2000.

William Maxwell was 7 when Hughes was the class poet of what was then the brand new Central

School, but it's conceivable that Hughes and Maxwell met. And they might have had some of the same teachers. So might have theologian and social critic Reinhold Niebuhr, who moved to Lincoln in 1902 when he was 10 and grew up to write the Serenity Prayer, win induction into the American Academy of

School at St. John's United Church of Christ, where Reinhold Niebuhr's father, Gustav, was pastor in the early part of the century.

Reinhold Niebuhr, Hughes and Maxwell all attended Central School within a span of 15 years, so it may have been teachers who shaped Lincoln into a little town with a knack

for producing great American writers, Lynn Spellman suggests. The most likely candidate is Hughes' composition instructor at Central, Ethel Welch, whom he named as his favorite in his autobiography *The Big Sea* and to whom he continued to send inscribed copies of his books into the 1940s.

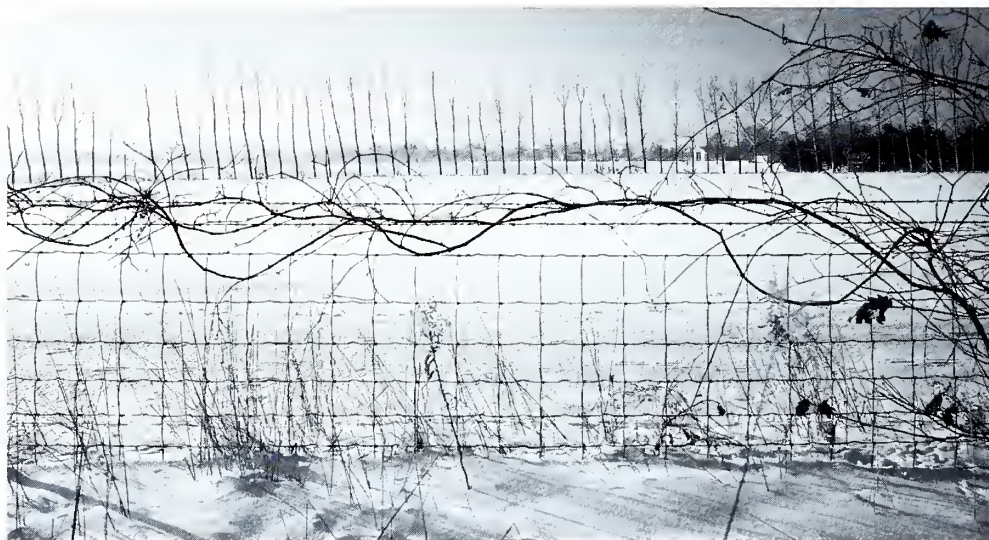
Spellman, a retired associate professor of English at Lincoln College, says as a teacher she would like to believe it was an academic influence that formed these men into gifted, internationally recognized writers. But she recognizes that the culture, the personality, the landscape of Lincoln inspired Maxwell — and the contemporary Lincoln haiku writer Lee Gurga. Simplicity, barebones structure, is characteristic of both writers' work. Neither Maxwell nor Gurga waste words on adjectives.

Winter prairie — a diesel locomotive throttles down in the night

Lee Gurga

Arts and Letters and be named in 1990 by *Life* magazine as one of its "100 Most Important Americans of the 20th Century." His main interest was in theological anthropology — the interrelationship of religion, the individual and society — which he explored in such books as *Moral Man and Immoral Society* and *Christianity and Power Politics*.

The Niebuhr family's nearly three-decade stay in Lincoln is noted on a historical marker next door to Central



Rhythm and Blue

Gurga limits his work mainly to the 17-syllable format, and *So Long, See You Tomorrow*, critically acclaimed as Maxwell's finest work, is notable for its tight prose, filling just 135 pages in trade paperback.

The sparseness of central Illinois, its unadorned language and wide-open landscape, informed these writers, and Lincoln, centered amid miles of gently rolling or flat farmland, is emblematic of Illinois literature. Of course, the majority of Illinois' people, and most of its buildings, are crammed into the corner of the state, up against the great lake. At its bottom tip, Illinois' craggy terrain is blanketed in forest. But most of Illinois looks like Lincoln, with a landscape defined by "fields," as Maxwell wrote, "that stretch all the way to the edge of the sky."

On the approach to Lee Gurga's rural Lincoln house from I-55, the vista, especially now, not long after harvest, is mostly sky. Brown, stubbled fields and blue, deep blue, Illinois sky.

"It gives you time to think about what's important in life if you live in a place like this," says Gurga, who uses words as a photographer does a lens to capture his environment and his experience, writing about "rows of corn that stretch to the horizon" and "the pink glow of the sunset" he's seen through ".22 holes in a country stop sign." In full haiku form, those phrases

would be expanded just slightly to flow into verse:

*Christmas morning —
bird dog in the stubblefield
chasing sparrows*

Gurga, who is designated as the next editor of the journal *Modern Haiku*, looks out his kitchen window at the woodland he is regenerating from what he calls the abuse of the last 100 years: the logging and grazing and farming. The neighboring property, he says, pointing to the east, is where Illinois' Grand Prairie biogeographical zone bleeds into the finger of the western forest division that extends into Logan County. "Western Illinois ends in my backyard, basically, and central Illinois begins," he tells a visitor.

His land is a bit hilly. It has a creek and varied vegetation: hedge trees, locust trees and multiflora roses. But it's not so hilly that an out-of-towner can't find the way to Lincoln from Gurga's homestead by driving toward the water tower on the horizon.

The pace is slower here; life is less complicated than in the urban environments where so much of literature is set. Gurga, whose haiku have won awards in the United States, Canada and Japan, says he's been enriched by the rural, Midwestern sensibility. Here, he says, he counts cars rather than frustrations when he's held up by a train.

The poet grew up in Chicago and

moved to Lincoln 22 years ago, and until they moved to their farmland south of Lincoln a decade ago, Gurga, his wife, Jan, and their three sons lived in Lincoln proper, on 10th Street, across an alley from the Maxwell home. Gurga walked to his dental office along a brick road lined with 100-year-old trees.

Maxwell's odyssey moved in reverse. He lived in Lincoln until he was 14, when his family moved to Chicago. He eventually settled in Manhattan. While Gurga writes in the moment, capturing a fleeting experience, Maxwell wrote mainly from the memory of Lincoln, his "imagination's home," which he sometimes referred to in his fiction as Logan or Draperville. "The texture of his work, the detail, comes from Lincoln," says Maxwell biographer Barbara Burkhardt. The defining moment of Maxwell's life as a writer was the death of his mother in the 1918 influenza epidemic. It is a subject he would return to again and again.

Burkhardt teaches a seminar in postmodern literature at the University of Illinois at Springfield, in which she discusses *So Long, See You Tomorrow*, a novel based on events Maxwell remembered from his childhood in Lincoln. Writing 60 years after his mother's death, "he brought the same sense of wonder to the



Frozen in Time

place,” now “tempered with wisdom and experience,” says Burkhardt, whom Maxwell charged with organizing his correspondence currently catalogued at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he earned his bachelor’s degree in 1930. “The setting is very stark — it’s bare,” she tells graduate students. So was his prose in the novel, says Burkhardt, who has expanded her dissertation on Maxwell into a full critical biography. “Certainly, that style is one of the most distinctive characteristics of his writing. Certainly, I think as he got older his language became more spare. I don’t know if it was intentional, but I think it serves to mirror the landscape.”

Maxwell was meticulous in his efforts to capture the exact language of Lincoln, and the personality of Lincoln resonates in Maxwell’s work, notes Burkhardt who reads her class pieces of Maxwell’s correspondence, including letters from Roger Angell, Maxwell’s editor at *The New Yorker*. As he was preparing to publish *So Long, See You Tomorrow* in the magazine, Angell wanted Maxwell to clean up the language, to get rid of the colloquialisms of the Midwest, phrases like “the reason why,” and the use of “that” instead of “which.” But Maxwell held fast. He had an ear for the subtlety of the language of 1920s Lincoln, and wanted to preserve it. That subtlety extended to the images of Lincoln that he portrayed: a wood counter scrubbed until it became soft like velvet, a murderer’s gunshot assumed to be the sound of a car backfiring. Or an interloper who hides behind haystacks, waiting for the first light from a farmer’s lantern “to come bobbing across the pasture.”

“I think they [dialect and description] work beautifully together to create a cohesive image both in sound and visual,” says Burkhardt. “You have this spare language and you have this landscape that can certainly be described as spare, this unrelenting horizon, ever out of reach of the land about which he’s writing.”

Maxwell lived in Lincoln long enough to absorb a strong sense of the people, Spellman says. Farm women

— mothers of school-age children — “reduced by hard work and frequent childbearing to a common denominator of plainness,” men who read only the newspaper, a dance instructor scandalized by a couple dancing cheek-to-check.

Caroline Kiest, the reference librarian at the Lincoln Library and next-door neighbor to Tim and Tami Kennett, who live in the Maxwell family home on Ninth Street, remembers coming to Lincoln as a child in the mid-1970s. Her mother read her Maxwell’s *They Came Like Swallows*, and would point to the Maxwell house, a sprawling structure with a side porch and bay windows, which Kiest calls a “payday home” — a hodge-podge design with additions erected as money became available. Her mother would say, “There’s the house; it’s right here.” Kiest smiles when she says, “We’re in that book — the Kiests — we’re the family hanging out the diapers.”

Not everyone in Lincoln has been pleased about Maxwell’s portrayal of his hometown. A central focus of *So Long, See You Tomorrow* is a murder that occurred in Lincoln in the 1920s. A tenant farmer shot a neighbor who had been having an affair with his wife.

One Lincoln resident who asked not be identified says that in a Lincoln Library copy of *So Long, See You Tomorrow* someone crossed out Maxwell’s fictive names and wrote in pencil the names of the people on whom the characters were based.

Maxwell had changed the names in the story, but little else. He used old newspaper stories from the Illinois State Historical Library to build his story out of his belief that “life is a great storyteller. You can’t improve on it.” He once said, “I hated to change the facts. The facts themselves were so beautiful.”

Though Lincoln is vividly portrayed in the Maxwell books ranging from *They Came Like Swallows* in 1937 to *Billie Dyer and Other Stories* in 1992, his relevance to the community slips past some. “Maxwell? What does he write? Mysteries? I’ve heard of him, but I’ve never read him,” says the proprietor of a used bookstore in

Lincoln. She checks the M’s where there are volumes by McCullough, MacLean, McBain, but no Maxwell. In the A’s, even Maxwell’s editor Roger Angell is represented with his homage to baseball, *A Season Ticket*.

In a section where very old books are shelved, another native Illinois writer — Edgar Rice Burroughs — turns up with *Tarzan the Terrible*, along with turn-of-the-century spellers and slim volumes of Shakespeare’s plays.

They’re well acquainted with Maxwell at Prairie Years Books and Prints, which is downtown next to Abe’s Carmelcorn. At Prairie Years, which actually devotes most of its space to what the sign out front describes as “quality toys,” six different Maxwell titles fill most of a shelf in the local authors section.

“In general, there are lots of people in town who are very much aware of Mr. Maxwell’s importance and his connection to Lincoln,” says Spellman, the retired Lincoln College instructor. She adds that she presented a list of historically significant literary connections to Lincoln to the tourism board awhile back, but was told there hasn’t been enough money to do anything about it.

Many of the buildings Maxwell wrote about, Central School, his two family homes, and Lincoln Junior High School, which was the high school in the author’s youth, still stand, though Central, which opened in 1915, is slated to be torn down, says Spellman, who notes that since the marker for the Niebuhrs went up earlier this year, visitors have come to Lincoln specifically to see it.

Sometimes it’s hard for a community to see the significance of the history that is enmeshed in daily life. “It’s like anything, people take it for granted,” says Kiest. “But they’re getting it.”

Spellman and others agree there is an intensified interest in Lincoln’s pivotal role in Maxwell’s work. And so it is possible that one day Spellman’s vision will be fulfilled, and the signs heading into Lincoln will tell the story of the little town’s literary legacy. □

Art and community

An affordable artist colony for half a century, Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood is on the rise. But as the rents go up, the artists are moving out

by Curtis Lawrence
Photograph by Jon Randolph

In the early morning hours, when most of the city is still dark, a few windows flash light from the Flat Iron building in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood. Behind one on the second story, artist Diana Solis has spent most of the night in front of a canvas. The three large shapes of blue, red and gold that swirl across the piece, she says, attempt to explain the earth's elements reaching out to each other. She plans to show the work next February at an exhibition in Barcelona, Spain.

Solis feels at home in the three-story Flat Iron Arts Building, which has a film noir aura: frosted glass windows in front of offices where one would expect to find an old-fashioned private eye with a bottle of whiskey in his desk drawer. The Flat Iron is a labyrinth of dark hallways. But instead of hard-bitten detectives, artists share the space with musicians, tattooists and an occult bookseller.

"I think what I like is the sense of community," Solis says.

But she and other artists struggling to survive a real estate boom worry their community is at risk as more affluent folks move into Wicker Park, northwest of Chicago's downtown

Loop and southwest of the trendy Near North lakefront neighborhoods.

In fact, Wicker Park, which has roots that stretch to the late 1880s, is at a crossroads. Will it go the way of gentrified Lincoln Park along the lake? Or will it keep to its rough reputation as the place where immigrants butchered meat in small shops on Milwaukee Avenue and where artists brought blank canvases to life in the Flat Iron?

That's a challenge faced by other gentrifying neighborhoods, in Chicago and across the country: Can a community reap the benefits of a booming real estate market without losing its essential character?

"I'm not sure how long the Flat Iron is going to last," Solis says. "I don't know how long it's going to be until a big developer comes along. It's a beautiful building."

But Bob Berger, who owns the Flat Iron, says the neighborhood doesn't have to worry about losing its soul as long as he's around. "It's the most exciting, passionate neighborhood I've ever run into."

Berger bought the building about 10 years ago. "When the event of the loft redevelopment pushed a lot

of the artists out, we became an oasis."

Though artists in the rest of Wicker Park have seen their monthly studio rents surpass the \$1,000 mark, Berger says he's determined to keep his building affordable. About 100 artists work there in some 60 studios paying rents ranging from \$325 to \$700.

It wouldn't be a surprise if the Flat Iron were to follow the trend in other Wicker Park buildings. Despite the slump in the national economy, many artists working in lofts along Milwaukee Avenue were forced out by skyrocketing rents as vacant lots and empty buildings were cleared for new three-flats and condos.

Of course, there's an upside to the trend. The neighborhood lost some of its rough edges when property values went up in the 1990s, but that wasn't all bad, says Kara Salgado, executive director of the Wicker Park Chamber of Commerce. "You saw a lot of development and a lot of condos, and the neighborhood became safer and safer."

She says the area has come a long way. A decade ago, patrons were afraid to get out of their cars to visit her art gallery.



The Flat Iron Arts Building in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood offers affordable rents to that community's artists.

And while housing costs have taken off — with prices ranging from \$150,000 condos to \$1 million homes — Salgado says the neighborhood is in no danger of losing its essence anytime soon. “You’ve got the tattooed, pierced folks and you’ve got yuppies with their baby carriages.”

This is not the first transformation Wicker Park has experienced since brothers Joel and Charles Wicker donated the land to the city in 1870. German brewery owners and other businessmen settled the neighborhood, building colorful frame Victorians along Hoyne and other side streets. Wicker Park soon developed a reputation for its architectural character and wealthy residents. Early on, it earned the moniker “Beer Baron Row.” Later, when Polish immigrants moved in, the area became known as the “Polish Gold Coast.”

But away from the mansions, Polish

immigrants, who labored on the railroads or in the factories, also helped give Wicker Park a reputation as a rough-edged working class community. That reputation was further developed by artists and such writers as Nelson Algren, who settled there in the 1940s and 1950s.

By the 1960s and 1970s, Wicker Park had a solid reputation as an artist community, which in part was spurred by affordable studios and apartments. The neighborhood took on a new ethnic character as Latinos moved in. By the 1980s, realtors were eyeing the area’s lofts and under-developed lots.

Annie Morse, an art historian who lives in Wicker Park, says the condo conversion and building trend peaked in the mid- to late-1990s. “When it’s a real profit-taking environment, that’s when artists lose out,” says Morse, who adds that it’s still nearly

impossible for young artists to find studio space in the neighborhood unless they are independently wealthy.

And that’s the downside. There’s a certain synergy that generates from artists working closely, Morse says. “If you feel a sense of solidarity with your community, you feel a grounding there.”

That sense of community resulted in part because artists and other residents watched out for each other in an area known for high crime and gangs. That began to change as Wicker Park was redeveloped. Morse calls it a transformation from a community where everyone knew their neighbors to a “garage culture,” where people politely wave as they come and go.

“When we moved here, we knew everybody on the block. Now there is no crime and there is no incentive to make friends with somebody that’s going to be gone in a few months,”

says Morse, referring to younger couples who move in for a short time to renovate a loft space or home before selling it for a profit.

Many of the young people who moved to Wicker Park in the last decade were attracted by the wild party life. Many flocked to such Wicker Park clubs as the Double Door to watch rock stars get their start, including the Smashing Pumpkins and Liz Phair. Others liked climbing staircases in tattered buildings to buy artwork fresh off the easels of aspiring artists. But after that same young crowd got a little older and started buying condos and loft space, the bohemian culture and nightlife lost its attraction.

"That's very attractive when you're out on a Saturday night and a lot less attractive when you're trying to sleep at night," Morse says.

By most accounts, crime has gone down along Milwaukee Avenue, but possibly at the price of the neighborhood's character and cohesion.

Yet, Olga Stefan, director of the Around the Coyote arts organization, contends that while many artists have left Wicker Park, the community has kept its character. Around the Coyote is dedicated to showing the work of local painters, muralists and sculptors, as well as that of international artists. Many agree the group is largely responsible for keeping Wicker Park's artsy reputation alive. Its September festival attracted more than 40,000 people to the neighborhood, according to organizers.

"Lincoln Park, for example, used to be a location where artists lived years and years ago, but once they moved out, the neighborhood became more yuppie," Stefan says. "It lost the arts feel while Wicker Park has not."

"If the festival were no longer here, I do think that this neighborhood would lose a major artistic resource and maybe indeed at that point it would lose a lot of its artistic feel," Stefan says.

"There are still young artists living in this neighborhood, although the rents are rather high. They're living with roommates or maybe they're sharing loft spaces. And there are still

some galleries that have remained here and people still look to this community to find that."

Across from the Flat Iron on Milwaukee, Martin Soto, who describes himself as a neo-expressionist artist, rents his gallery/studio space from Ken Lubinski, who owns one of the many furniture stores that dot the neighborhood. His latest work, an abstract with a colorful splash of flowers growing out of a cow's skull, was recently displayed in Citibank lobbies in Chicago as part of Hispanic Heritage month.

Soto worked out of the Flat Iron in the early 1990s before leaving for a 10-year stint in Philadelphia and New York. He returned to Wicker Park last year. "When I lived here [before] it was totally cutthroat," Soto recalled recently as he cut through the Flat Iron's lobby on his way to his studio. "There was nothing but prostitutes, drug dealers, alcoholics, bums and homeless people. Now you can walk the streets and be perfectly safe." When he returned, Soto found a more sanitized Wicker Park. He also saw that many of his artist friends had been priced out of the area.

Soto, a painter, muralist and sculptor, says he has been able to survive, in part, because of his experience in New York. "Being in New York, everything is expensive, so when I came back here, I was ready for it," says Soto, who won't reveal how much rent he is paying now. But in New York, his Wicker Park space could easily rent for \$7,000 or \$8,000, far more than he pays.

Soto, who sells his work from his Axis gallery and on his Web site, doesn't agree that it takes starving artists to preserve Wicker Park's identity.

"Material wealth is OK in the music world, but when you get to the visual arts, why should wealth and prosperity and all of these good things be a threat to an artist or painter?" asks Soto, who owns a home in Hyde Park and doesn't apologize for driving a BMW. "It's about your ability to make a living at what you do."

"I have less of a problem with artists getting pushed out than I do with Puerto Ricans getting pushed

By most accounts, crime has gone down along Milwaukee Avenue, but possibly at the price of the neighborhood's character and cohesion.

out." He says high rents and property taxes have forced Puerto Ricans and other Latinos out of Wicker Park.

Solis, who also works as a photographer chronicling events in the Mexican community, shares Soto's concerns about Latinos disappearing from the Wicker Park landscape.

And she agrees that changes in Wicker Park haven't been all bad for artists. She gets free-lance jobs that she wouldn't have gotten 10 years ago, when she was new to the area.

Still, especially for younger artists just starting out, Wicker Park doesn't offer the opportunities it once did, she says. "It's not a place where you can come and start out. It's almost impossible to get an affordable rent and to find a decent work space."

"I'm lucky to live in a place that has not been rehabbed," says Solis, who lives about four blocks from the Flat Iron with her two huskies, Cheyenne and Comino. But if the landlord decides to sell or remodel, Solis says she will likely become one of the artists who lists Wicker Park as a former address.

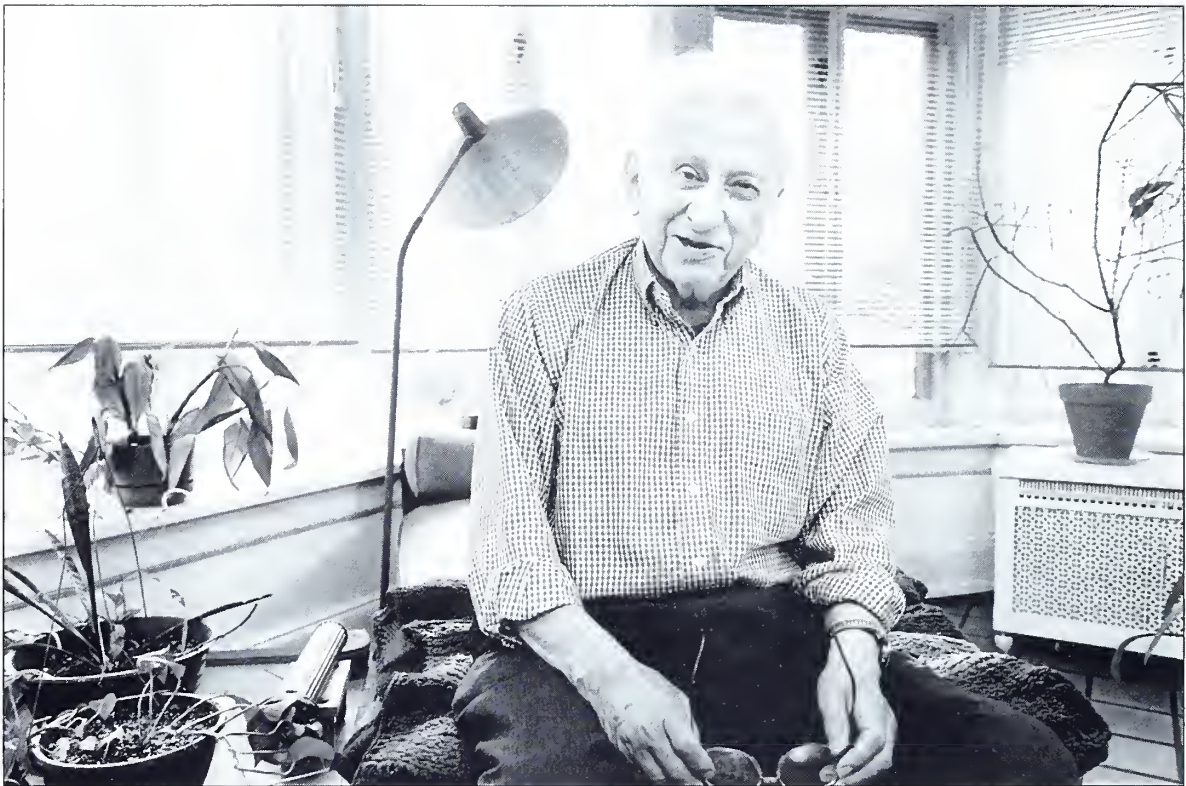
And though Bob Berger, the Flat Iron landlord, swears he'll keep the building affordable, Solis says, despite the best intentions, there are no guarantees in Wicker Park anymore. □

Curtis Lawrence is a Chicago Sun-times reporter who writes about housing and urban issues.

History from the bottom up

Using Chicago as a microcosm, Studs Terkel
has helped define America, with all its divisions and unions

by Aaron Chambers
Photographs by Jon Randolph



Studs Terkel is on the other side of the tape recorder. “I always check that, check it as you do it, ‘cause I’ve goofed up a lot myself with a tape recorder,” he says at the start of an interview in his Chicago home. “I always worry about that. You want to check that? I have a hunch, you know.”

The 89-year-old Terkel is a self-described Luddite, someone who rejects technological change. He doesn’t drive a car and, for that matter, has no

license to drive. He prefers a typewriter to a computer. And, as he confesses, he sometimes has trouble operating basic recording equipment.

Yet concern about whether this reporter’s microcassette recorder is activated is probably driven by something more: Terkel just can’t help himself. He has to be engaged; he has to be connected. And he has a way of bringing people down to earth.

“Sometimes when I’m sitting next to that person who has never been

interviewed before — this was in the days before the tape recorder became the household tool that it is today; it was new, and I was using reel-to-reel before the cassette — and that person says, ‘Hey, it’s not moving,’ and I say, ‘Oh my God, I pressed the wrong button.’ But in a way, that’s kinda nice because that person knows he is not facing some Olympian figure from *60 Minutes*, Mike Wallace. He’s facing kinda a goof guy, like he is, and he feels good. He realizes that he

helps me.”

Of course, Terkel is usually the one in charge of the tape recorder. For nearly 50 years, he has talked with ordinary, or “noncelebrated,” people about their lives. They talk about work, family, dreams, fears. His subjects, in turn, offer personal, often extraordinary stories.

Using Chicago as a microcosm, Terkel has helped define America, with all its divisions and unions. He has preserved some of the nation’s greatest events and issues, in the words of those who lived them. And when Terkel goes to work, he draws the rest of the world into the conversation.

The October release of his most recent work, *Will the Circle Be Unbroken?*, is his 12th collection of interviews on topics ranging from race to the Great Depression to the American Dream. The first, *Division Street: America*, was published in 1967. It’s comprised of transcripts of conversations Terkel had with 70 Chicagoans. There’s Tom Kearney, a 53-year-old police officer. There’s Valerie Bosard, a 73-year-old retired nurse. There’s Stan Lenard, a 35-year-old actor and former interior decorator.

The stories jump from the pages as these folks talk about their trials in the city. For each, the city is at once an all-consuming wasteland and the place they call home. Nelson Algren, a Chicago writer quoted in the book’s prefatory notes, sets the mood: “It’s every man for himself in this hired air. Yet once you’ve come to be a part of this particular patch, you’ll never love another. Like loving a woman with a broken nose, you may find lovelier lovelies. But never a lovely so real.”

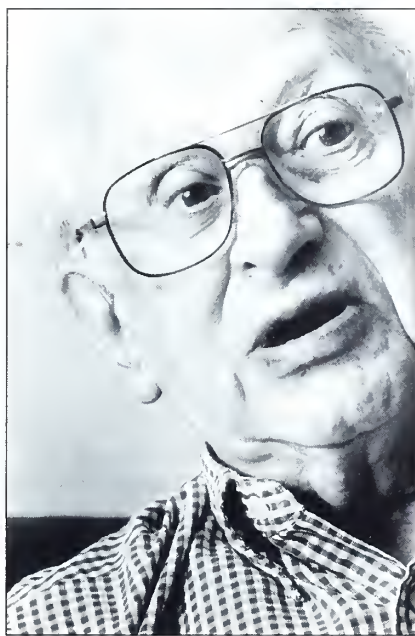
Terkel’s best known collection, *Working*, followed in 1974. In the book, which was adapted into a Broadway musical, ordinary workers talk about what they do all day. Lucky Miller is a 26-year-old cabdriver who drifts in and out of school. Ray Wax is a stockbroker on Wall Street. Bud Freeman is a tenor saxophone player.

Another collection, *The Good War*, earned a Pulitzer Prize. Terkel talks to veterans and others about their memories of an event that changed the world. His latest work, stories about

death and dying, includes interviews with an undertaker, a doctor, a homicide detective and a former Death Row inmate.

Some of the interviews in Terkel’s 12 books were originally recorded for broadcast on WFMT, a fine arts radio station in Chicago where Terkel hosted a show for 45 years.

At the microphone, he’s part psychologist, part sociologist and part historian. He’s skilled in framing questions to unlock doors and seems to know at least a little bit about everything. But it’s Terkel’s sheer humanity and sincere curiosity that ultimately compel people to reveal themselves.



In an increasingly high-tech world, Terkel is salvaging the human voice. Moreover, he’s collecting the voices of those who often go unheard: hair stylists, farm workers, elevator operators, prostitutes. Historians call that “history from the bottom up.”

“I think Studs looks beyond the postcard Chicago into the real Chicago that’s being sculpted every day by everyday people,” says Hank De Zutter, a long-time friend of Terkel’s and vice president of the Community Media Workshop in Chicago. “He makes everyone feel important because he goes out and gets those stories. And by so doing, he reinforces the city’s identity. Chicago may not even know what it is until it’s

told by Studs Terkel that this is what it is.”

The Columbia College-based workshop is dedicated to connecting the media with what it calls “the gritty real Chicago, where problems linger, and solutions are created by citizens noisily exercising their democratic rights.” To the workshop, De Zutter says, Terkel is a “spiritual father.”

Though Terkel was born in New York City, he was raised in Chicago. His family owned the Wells-Grand Hotel, where he worked as a clerk, his first job. For people like De Zutter, Terkel symbolizes his adopted city, which so many of his characters also call home.

“Perhaps because of the national exposure and recognition, Chicago rose to adopt him as a ‘Chicago character,’” says Bill Kurtis, the television journalist. “He’s like a monument in town. There’s the Billy Goat Tavern. There was Harry Caray. And there’s Studs. They’re ‘characters’ because they are unique to Chicago.”

In 1990, Terkel was among 35 Illinois authors whose names were etched into the frieze of the Illinois State Library when its new building was dedicated. He joined the likes of Jane Addams, founder of Chicago’s social settlement Hull House, Ernest Hemingway, and other writers native to Illinois or whose work is identified with this state.

In a brochure describing each writer, the library credited Terkel with “turning oral history into fine art” by editing and shaping his interviews with ordinary people “into powerful accounts of aspects of modern American life, a genuinely popular history that emphasizes not so much public events themselves as the way ordinary people understand and experience those events.”

Next May, Terkel will celebrate his 90th birthday. He’s not thinking about that; he has his hands full working on two more books — one on hope and another on music. “I’m not going to finish either; I doubt it,” he says. “But I’ve got two more I’ve gotta do. It’s the journey that counts, not the goal. I like the journey.”

At least for now, Terkel is alive and



For Terkel, his work is about capturing history and saving humanity. He likes to think he can help stave off what he calls “the national Alzheimer’s disease,” the public’s lack of knowledge about history.

well. He has trouble hearing, but his mind runs like a well-oiled machine. Precision, of course, yields to enthusiasm.

In the space of two hours, he repeatedly tries to talk about two or three subjects at once. He recalls decades-old interviews in detail. He quotes from poetry and songs. He quizzes this reporter about history, and asks about state politics. He talks about the day’s news.

He jumps up from his seat to greet and chat with the mailman, who rings the doorbell when he stops at Terkel’s North Side home. When Terkel returns, he fields a couple phone calls. Then he offers apple juice.

Naturally, there’s a story, or a joke, at every turn. Terkel likes to say, for instance, that there’s only one other man who was as enamored of the tape recorder: the late Richard Nixon. Then he puts his own spin on the words of René Descartes, the 17th-century philosopher who wrote, “I think, therefore I am.” As far as Terkel is concerned, the statement on human identity goes, “I tape, therefore I am.”

Indeed, Terkel’s genre, “popularized” oral history, rests on the tape recorder. Technology may be his enemy, but it’s also his best friend. Mainstream use of the technology, which coincided with the beginning of Terkel’s interviewing career in the early 1950s, has made saving and transcribing his long conversations possible.

“I’m a Luddite, but I’m a hypocrite,” he says. Besides the tape recorder, Terkel readily acknowledges his dependence on the refrigerator: “How else would I freeze my martini glass?” And the modern washing machine: “You hate to see a woman outside slapping wet clothes against a rock.” And modern medicine: He underwent life-saving quintuple bypass surgery in 1996.

His posture softening, Terkel concedes that technological progress isn’t necessarily inherently evil. “What I’m trying to say is that the Internet is good. A lot of things are happening. At the same time, I’m worried about less and less of the human sound and more of the mechanical sound. And there may be a point of diminishing

delight, of diminishing benefit, I don’t know.”

In any case, Terkel has established himself as a master of his craft. While his work has been criticized for not meeting generally accepted standards of oral history — he edits interviews, deletes questions from transcripts and doesn’t fully describe his subjects — he is nonetheless respected as an oral historian in both academic and non-academic circles. In fact, he is credited with popularizing oral history in the homes of nonacademic people, and with helping to fuel a grass-roots oral history movement.

“He, more than any single individual, awakened in citizens the notion that there is interesting history that lies right within the memory of family members and neighbors and others, that there is an interesting story anywhere if you just take the time and trouble to pursue it,” says Cullom Davis, professor of history emeritus at the University of Illinois at Springfield. He oversaw the school’s oral history collection for 17 years.

Alan Harris Stein says Terkel inspired a whole generation of writers, teachers and oral historians. He’s producing a documentary titled *Rocking the Boat: Studs Terkel’s 20th Century*, and is preparing to teach oral history next summer at Roosevelt University in Chicago.

“Terkel has driven oral history to its origins — storytelling — especially among the common folk, and their lore,” he says. “In my opinion, Terkel is more a folk-historian, using oral history to project a library of voices he has collected over the last 50 years. That’s why he’s so popular. He gives the stories back to the people.”

For Terkel, his work is about capturing history and saving humanity. He likes to think he can help stave off what he calls “the national Alzheimer’s disease,” the public’s lack of knowledge about history. And he hopes he can help people rediscover the human voice.

He recalls interviewing a woman with four kids and no husband living in a housing project. She had never been interviewed before. After the interview, her children were anxious to

hear their mother's voice on tape.

"I said, 'Keep quiet and I'll play it back.' I played back her voice and she hears her voice! She puts her hand to her mouth and says, 'Oh my God.' I said, 'What?' She says, 'I never knew I felt that way before.' That's a bingo! That's a big moment for her and a big moment for me. Stuff like that I find exciting. They find out something about themselves and we find out things; that person is saying something I felt but never got around to saying."

Terkel decided long ago that he would focus his work on ordinary people. "Just the ordinary people who have never been asked questions before about their lives," he says. Now and then he does interview celebrities, such as author Kurt Vonnegut or activist Cesar Chavez, but he says those people are included in his books only as a point of comparison to others.

Along that line, Terkel refers to a poem by Bertolt Brecht, the German playwright, as one of his creeds. In "Questions from a worker who reads," Brecht asks whether King Philip of Spain was the only one to weep when his armada was defeated in 1588.

"The history that I try to recapture is about those who shed those other tears," Terkel says. "These are the anonymous, ordinary people of history. And I find 'ordinary' is a word I don't like too much because sometimes in emergencies these ordinary people are capable of extraordinary deeds."

For historians, that makes history more accessible. Erin McCarthy, a lecturer at Columbia College, uses Terkel's collection of stories about World War II to help teach an undergraduate course on oral history. "He really tries to be inclusive and get as many points of view, as many perspectives, as possible," she says. "That is very hard to find."

Clark "Bucky" Halker is a labor historian and folk musician who was a regular guest on Terkel's former radio show. He says, "Studs has a way of making people tell their stories and making it clear that people who are not intellectuals or wealthy or whatever really have something worth saying

and have made vital contributions to society. There's a real need for people to write popular history and not just academic stuff. Studs is really accessible; you don't have to be brilliant, well educated and have a Ph.D. to decipher his work."

Those are solid compliments for a man who claims he started doing interviews by accident. After graduating from the University of Chicago with undergraduate and law degrees, Terkel turned to acting in radio soap operas. He often played a gangster, a dead-end role, he says. "Two, three weeks and then you get shot, or fall off a cliff or get executed." He then worked as a sports commentator and a television emcee. In the early 1950s, he played himself in "Studs' Place," a television drama that was mostly improvised.

The show was terminated after Terkel, a social liberal, was blacklisted for petitions he signed and rallies he attended in the 1930s and 1940s. So he took a job as a disc jockey at WFMT, the radio station. He played music, read short stories and hosted documentaries. And he started talking to guests, musicians and the like, on the air.

"I got a call one day from a listener who says, 'You should do that more often.' Do what? 'Well, I don't know how to explain it but when I hear you on the air talking to someone, it sounds like I'm hearing an actual conversation and not something processed.' So, from then on I started interviewing people as well: writers, people in the neighborhood." That was 1952. The show closed in 1998.

As for his work, Terkel plays down applause. He would rather not even be called an oral historian. "I'm a whatnot. A whatnot is a piece of furniture in which you put everything — letters, notes, telephone conversations, anything," he says. "I'm a whatnot, a two-legged whatnot. I still call myself a disc jockey."

Terkel prepares to rush off to an engagement with his son, Dan. First, he returns to his theme: rediscovering the human voice. For an instant, as he begins another story, he looks sad, deeply concerned about what he sees

Terkel decided long ago that he would focus his work on ordinary people. "Just the ordinary people who have never been asked questions before about their lives," he says.

as the loss of humanity in the face of the mechanical enterprise. But as he unfolds the story, he grows jubilant again, bouncing slightly and waving his hands.

He remembers a trip he made through an Atlanta airport several years back. He boarded a train to depart the airport and, just as the train was to pull away, a couple jumped through the doorway. The door, which had been closing, reopened. And an electronic voice announced the train would be delayed 30 seconds because of the late entry.

"Well, I happened to have had a couple drinks to steel myself for occasions of this sort. So what do I do? I cup my hands over my mouth like an old-time train caller: 'George Orwell, your time has come and gone.' There is dead silence on that train. They all look at me. I say what the hell has happened to us here? Is there no humor? And finally I see a little baby, maybe about eight months old. The mother is talking to her friend in Spanish.

"So I say to the baby, and I cup my hand over my mouth because my breath is 100 proof, 'Sir or Madam, what is your opinion of the human species?' And what does a baby do when an old nut starts in? It starts giggling. I said, 'Thank God, a human voice.' So there's hope."

That was several years ago. By now, that baby may be ready for another talk with Terkel. □

THE ART OF REVITALIZATION

More Illinois cities should turn to the aesthetic and economic benefits of cultural districts

by Hilary Anne Frost-Kumpf

From the Arts Center to the Circa 21 Dinner Theatre, from the Botanical Center to the Casino Rock Island riverboat, the Rock Island Arts and Entertainment District is a one-stop cultural destination for the Quad Cities.

The district is bringing life and commerce back to that city's center. And it's not happening by accident. In fact, Rock Island is part of a national trend. Within the past 20 years, more than 115 cities throughout the country have made cultural districts part of their revitalization strategies. The idea is at work in Pittsburgh, Tucson and St. Louis. Here in Illinois, there's also Chicago's North Loop Theatre District, Rockford's Cultural Corridor, and the Harrison Street Arts District in Oak Park. There's an arts district in Carbondale and a proposed cultural district in Bloomington.

Cultural districts, sometimes known as "arts districts," "theater districts," "museum districts," or "arts and entertainment districts," are recognized areas of a city that have a high concentration of cultural facilities. These geographically defined areas, usually less than 100 blocks, are promoted as a package. Rather than visiting one gallery, or one theater, residents and tourists are encouraged to tour—and spend money in—the entire cultural district.

Communities have a lot of options in creating such districts, too. Some



municipalities, for instance, establish a more formal designation, even folding art and culture districts into their zoning ordinances. Districts can involve private as well as public money, or both. Renaissance Rock Island, a nonprofit consortium made up of the Development Association of Rock Island, the Rock Island Economic Growth Corporation and the Downtown 2000 Steering Committee, was the engine that put together that city's district. In Madison, Wis., a private donor has committed \$100 million. In Pittsburgh, the city invested \$33 million in its cultural district, which in turn generated an additional \$63 million in private funds.

Establishing a cultural district is a strategy more Illinois communities could—and should—employ when the need for improved cultural amenities align with the need for urban revitalization.

Rock Island's district was established in 1991 when the need for improved spaces for local performing and visual

arts groups coincided with a need for renewal in Rock Island's central core. In Rockford, the development of the cultural district began with the renovation of the old Coronado Theatre as a home for the Rockford Symphony and other local performing groups.

The benefits the districts have brought to these and other cities across the nation are at once aesthetic and economic. The arts, entertainment, historical and literary organizations housed in these areas are the bearers of the goods and services that promote quality of life to a community through the creation of murals, public art, festivals and performances in outdoor amphitheaters and concert halls.

Dollars and development follow. Occupancy rates of retail locations are on the rise since Rock Island established its arts and entertainment district. A new office building has gone up, the first new construction in downtown Rock Island for years. And the Renaissance and Goldman buildings are being rehabilitated to include 52 loft apartments. More than 175,000 people visit downtown every year to attend events in the district. And what was once labeled the worst downtown in that region of Illinois is now the considered one of the best. □

Hilary Anne Frost-Kumpf teaches public administration and coordinates the Community Arts Management concentration in the Master of Public Administration program at the University of Illinois at Springfield.

Q&A Question & Answer

Larry Shiner

*Philosopher Larry Shiner's book, **The Invention of Art: A Cultural History**, was recently published by The University of Chicago Press. Shiner, who teaches at the University of Illinois at Springfield, argues that the concept of fine art is a relatively new invention. He says the book was enriched by what he learned while preparing courses in the philosophy of art, Greek civilization and mythology, and literary theory and criticism.*

Karl Scroggin, who reports on the arts for WUIS/WIPA at the University of Illinois at Springfield, talked with Shiner. This is an edited version of that conversation.

Q. *What prompted you to write the book?*

I wanted to give my students in philosophy of art and other classes a simple, short book that would trace the history of the concept of art. Most of them were surprised to learn that there has been a great break, and that it meant something very different 200 years ago than it does today. And I wanted it to be a book that would be of interest to the general reader.

A lot of popular books, television shows on the history of art, talk about the concept of art as if it has a continuous history starting with the ancient Greeks. And even many distinguished philosophers and historians have argued that Plato or Aristotle had something like the modern notion of fine art.

So I have a brief first section of the book that talks about the old concept of art, an older, broader notion of art that included what we today would exclude as belonging to the crafts or to entertainment.

Q. *So when did this concept of artisan vs. artist come into being?*



Right into the middle, even almost to the end, of the 18th century, you could use the word "artisan" and "artist" interchangeably, and you can go to dictionaries in every major European language and you will find that they do not make a profound distinction. In fact, the word "artist" was more frequently used in the 17th and early 18th century for alchemists than it was for painters. The other use of the word "artist" was for a liberal arts student.

Q. *Is modern man's concept of art and the artist going to change? Is there anyplace else for this idea to go?*

Oh, absolutely. One of the things I suggest in the book, and just suggest, is that we may be in another period of transformation, so that a third way of looking at the concept, and the practice of art would be coming into being.

It fascinates me that the modern notion of art that got established in the 18th century was a notion that art is this very special realm set apart from other human activities. It is above the realm of craft, entertainment, decoration and so on. And from the early 19th century, you already get people who criticize this notion of the

separation of art and life. Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his essay entitled "Art," was one of the first to attack what he said is this notion that art is this separate and contrasted phenomenon, this entity standing apart from life, and that we ought to reunite art and life.

That's been the theme ever since with some artists and composers and writers: We ought to bring art and life back together. The very fact that you can talk about it in that way shows the separation that had occurred at the beginning of the 19th century, and it shows this yearning to restore, somehow, the integration of the arts with everyday life. I think some of the most outlandish experiments in art in the 20th century have really been motivated in part by the desire to bring art back into life.

Q. *What sort of research did you have to do?*

I'm trying to pull together three major concepts. The concept of art itself, the concept of the artist, the figure, image, the ideal of what an artist ought to be, and, finally, the notion of the aesthetic, how we should experience art.

The very term "aesthetic," for example, was only coined in the 18th century. The idea became established by the early 19th century that there's this special kind of experience of art where you experience something just for itself in a kind of open, dispassionate way.

But then things got even more complicated because I realized I had to deal not only with the visual arts, which we often think of when we say the word "art," but, of course, the concept of fine art extends to music, to poetry, to the novel and then, once photography was invented, there was the art known as photographic art and there's film and jazz. I mean you can just keep going. □

LETTERS



Write us

Your comments are welcome.
Please keep them brief (250 words)
We reserve the right to excerpt then

Letters to the Editor

Illinois Issues

University of Illinois at Springfield

Springfield, IL 62794-9243

e-mail address on Internet:

boyer-long peggy@uis.edu

And visit *Illinois Issues* online by
going to: <http://illinoisissues.uis.edu>

TIME HONORED MUSIC. TIMELY NEWS AND TALK.



COOL JAZZ •

CLASSICAL MUSIC •

COMPREHENSIVE NEWS •

COMPELLING TALK •

For full programming, visit our
web site: www.uis.edu/wuis

WUIS 91.9 Springfield
WIPA 89.3 Pittsfield

Programming on WUIS/WIPA is sponsored in part by generous listeners.
Broadcast from The University of Illinois @ Springfield.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

IRHA invites you to participate
in their 13th Annual Conference

**Rural Health:
On Track for Our Future**

April 16-18, 2002

Radisson Hotel & Conference Center
Bloomington, Illinois

For More Information, Call IRHA
800-500-1560 or log on to
www.ilruralhealth.org

Illinois. Featuring Talent.



On Firm Ground

Photographs by LARRY KANFER

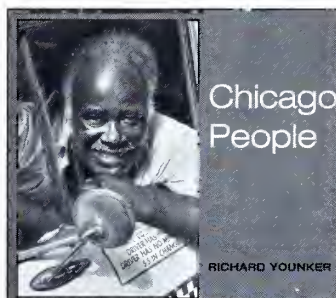
"Midwestern Majesty. . . Kanfer is one of the country's
more gifted photographers. He has the sensitivity and
the eye of Ansel Adams and Eliot Porter."

— Milton Esterow, *Art News*

"Kanfer has conjured up images that are uniquely and
distinctly American. . . He manages the not-inconsid-
erable feat of making one long for the Middle West."

— Jonathan Yardley, *Washington Post Book World*

Hardcover, \$39.95



Chicago People

RICHARD YOUNKER

A *Chicago Tribune* "Editor's Choice"

"Chicagoan Richard Younker takes readers into pool
halls, factories . . . and churches in the city. In this pow-
erful book of black-and-white documentary photogra-
phy, we meet people living without luxury or comfort. As
winter approaches and we curl up by a cozy fireplace,
this book is a reminder of those on the outside."

— Elizabeth Taylor, *Chicago Tribune*

Hardcover, \$50.00; Paperback, \$20.00



UNIVERSITY OF **ILLINOIS** PRESS

800.545.4703

www.press.uillinois.edu

Madeleine Doubek



The suburbs are undergoing an imaginative transformation

by Madeleine Doubek

"The suburbs," nonsuburbanites sometimes tease. "You mean you actually live and work in that barren land of strip malls and cookie-cutter ranch houses? Ugh."

"Oh, that is just soooo 1980s," I pledge to respond from this day forward. And it's true. Chicago's northwest suburbs have undergone a transformation in the past five years or so. Art and culture abound in many new, but older-looking downtowns across the suburbs. From Des Plaines to Mount Prospect, from Arlington Heights to Palatine, from Barrington and beyond along the Northwest Metra rail line, suburban downtowns have been built or re-created with great success.

Schaumburg, birthplace of the mongo mall, Woodfield, may have started the trend when it created a town center of quaint specialty shops and restaurants years ago. To the west, Hanover Park is considering something similar. Others will be right behind.

Why? Suburban planners realize a downtown can revitalize a municipality in many ways. It provides a community core. Many of the suburban downtowns feature condominium and townhouse developments, which provide a ready base of nearby residents who will patronize downtown shops and restaurants and art galleries. And that bolsters a municipality's tax base.

I must admit I was a skeptic when Arlington Heights, home of the *Daily Herald*, launched construction a few

Art and culture abound in many new, but older-looking downtowns across the suburbs.

years ago. It already had a nice downtown where my co-workers and I could stroll on lunch breaks, pick up birthday cards and drop off dry cleaning. Community leaders developed a plan that called for 14-story residential and retail buildings. Those structures now tower over the downtown and cast long shadows over some of the surrounding area. But the residential units in those towers are filling with young professionals who hop the train to work in downtown Chicago. They're also filling with seniors who don't want to keep up homes, but also don't want to leave the town where they raised their children.

Some of the sale prices are incredible. In Arlington Heights, there wasn't much difficulty selling the most expensive unit. A two-story, seventh-floor space that includes a cupola sold for \$856,000 to a woman who has four children and 14 grandchildren living in the immediate vicinity. Two of her children operate a business in the performing arts center around the corner.

Still, success has its victims, too. Some of the smaller book and gift shop owners struggled to keep their books balanced during two years of construc-

tion and now find they face skyrocketing rents and taxes. Property taxes there shot up nearly 87 percent over the 10-year period of renovation. Some shop owners are contemplating closing.

Suburbs that have launched downtown renovations still struggle with transportation issues. Town leaders still must find more ways to draw residents who do not live close to the downtown. They must find places for these people to park and convince them to get out, walk the streets and patronize the shops.

One of the ways to draw people to the town center is to increase entertainment options. Along with rehabbed downtowns, culture and arts centers and theatres are popping up all over.

Arlington Heights' downtown has a movie house with multiple screens showing first-run features. Blocks away is the still-young Metropolis Performing Arts Centre. Less than two years old, the 350-seat Metropolis already is home to a cast of the Second City comedy troupe and the Highland Park-based Apple Tree Theatre that performs plays. It also has hosted several top-notch cabaret singers.

Miles west in Palatine, Harper Community College will open a new performing arts center next summer. And later in the fall, the renovated Raue Center for the Arts will open in Crystal Lake in a building first constructed in 1929 with mission-style architecture.

For several years now, a fine suburban version of the *Nutcracker Suite* is performed at the 16-year-old, 442-seat Prairie Center for the Performing Arts in Schaumburg. Top-rated jazz and dance acts are regulars in that small venue and have been popular enough that village leaders are considering adding a complementary 3,000- to 5,000-seat center.

Farther west, the 1,200-seat, 32-year-old Hemmens Cultural Center in Elgin is home to the top-notch Elgin Symphony Orchestra. It also regularly offers concerts by such veteran performers as Willie Nelson and Judy Collins.

The suburbs are no longer the land of unimaginative strip malls. And gentrification is no longer a Chicago phenomenon. Move over, Wicker Park. Here comes Hanover Park. □

Madeleine Doubek is assistant metro editor/projects & politics for the Daily Herald, a suburban metro newspaper.

Charles N. Wheeler III



A GOP political strategist turns to popular culture to define the Dems

by Charles N. Wheeler III

With the filing date for next year's elections just a few weeks away, perhaps it's no surprise that political operatives already have begun sniping at potential rivals, gearing up for the really serious badmouthing next year.

In that vein, some Republican spear carriers have been disparaging one possible Democratic statewide lineup as the "All My Children" ticket, drawing on the popular ABC soap opera.

The targets of the GOP scorn appear to be a quartet of Democrats who share the suspect — at least in some Republican eyes — traits of being both young and well-pedigreed politically.

They include:

- U.S. Rep. Rod Blagojevich, 44, a gubernatorial hopeful and son-in-law of Richard Mell, Chicago alderman and 33rd Ward committeeman.
- State Comptroller Daniel Hynes, 33, who is seeking re-election and is the son of Thomas Hynes, former Senate president and Cook County assessor.
- State Sen. Lisa Madigan, 35, a candidate for attorney general and the daughter of Michael Madigan, speaker of the Illinois House.
- State Rep. Thomas Dart, 39, who is running for state treasurer and is the son of William Dart, chief corporation counsel for the late Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley.

Never mind that it's more than three months until the primary election that

Perhaps said critic's tone might have been less condescending, were he better informed on Illinois political history. After all, people who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

will determine who will be the Democratic nominees, or that Blagojevich and Madigan must overcome Democratic challengers to become the party's standard bearers. The "All My Children" line is just too cute for Republican minions to pass up.

"The Illinois Democrats seem to believe this is the House of Lords, rather than a representative government," one GOP functionary told the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. The potential lineup "reeks of inexperience," he added. "There's a lack of the necessary credentials for some of the offices being sought by these kids."

Perhaps said critic's tone might have been less condescending, were he

better informed on Illinois political history. After all, people who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

If the implication is that youthfulness is the problem, consider former Gov. William Stratton, a beloved GOP party elder who died in March at age 87. Those familiar with Illinois history no doubt will remember his sobriquet as the "Boy Governor," earned upon his election in 1952 at age 38, the youngest man to hold the office in 70 years. That victory followed earlier ones as state treasurer at age 28 and as a U.S. representative at age 26, making him the youngest member of the 77th Congress.

Or consider former U.S. Sen. Charles Percy, who two years before his election to the Senate was the 38-year-old Republican nominee for governor in 1964. Or former Gov. James Thompson, elected to the first of his record four terms in 1976 as a 40-year-old novice.

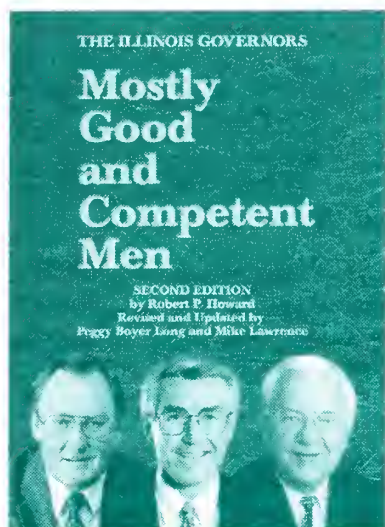
But perhaps it's not age. Maybe the GOP hangup is with the four Democrats' political connections. That, too, is an argument fraught with hypocrisy for Republicans; who could be so naive as to argue that family ties played no part in launching George W. Bush on the path that ultimately took him to the White House? Or consider former U.S. Sen. Howard Baker Jr., a Tennessee lawyer who was the son-in-law of Illinois' U.S. Sen. Everett McKinley Dirksen well before he was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1966 with the help of his legendary father-in-law.

There's even a political dynasty in Gov. George Ryan's background. When the governor was a freshman Illinois House member in 1973, one of his mentors was former state Sen. Edward McBroom, a Kankakee Republican holding the same seat held for more than a dozen years by his father, former state Sen. Victor McBroom, the long-time Kankakee County GOP chairman.

Nothing in the foregoing refresher

Holiday Gift of Reading

Mostly Good and Competent Men



Meet
the 39
Governors
of Illinois
for only **\$17.95**
(includes shipping & handling)

*"a mostly good and competent
story about...Illinois governors"*

—CHICAGO TRIBUNE
5/3/99

☐ Please send book to:
Name _____
Address _____ State _____ Zip _____
City _____

From:
Name _____
Address _____ State _____ Zip _____
City _____

☐ Send a gift card with book
☐ Payment of \$17.95 (payable to Institute Publications)
Credit card ☐ VISA ☐ Mastercard
Acct. No. _____ Exp. Date _____
Signature _____



4-3-60002-0650

Always Connected

The future of education is online!

Make UIS online classes part of **your future!** Take a single course or your entire degree program from the University of Illinois at Springfield. Bring the quality learning environment of the University of Illinois at Springfield into the comfort of your home or office...at your convenience. Courses are available in a variety of disciplines and each course is fully transferable. **Sixty-five online** spring classes begin Jan 22, 2002. For more information,



call (217) 206-7317,

or visit <http://online.uis.edu>.

Contact the UIS Office of Admissions
at (217) 206-6626 or (800) 252-8533.



UNIVERSITY of ILLINOIS at SPRINGFIELD ONLINE



NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES



BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 1901 SPRINGFIELD, IL

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

Illinois Issues

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT SPRINGFIELD

PO Box 19243

Springfield, IL 62794-9980



carriers have been disparaging one possible Democratic statewide lineup as the “All My Children” ticket, drawing on the popular ABC soap opera.

The targets of the GOP scorn appear to be a quartet of Democrats who share the suspect — at least in some Republican eyes — traits of being both young and well-pedigreed politically.

They include:

- U.S. Rep. Rod Blagojevich, 44, a gubernatorial hopeful and son-in-law of Richard Mell, Chicago alderman and 33rd Ward committeeman.
- State Comptroller Daniel Hynes, 33, who is seeking re-election and is the son of Thomas Hynes, former Senate president and Cook County assessor.
- State Sen. Lisa Madigan, 35, a candidate for attorney general and the daughter of Michael Madigan, speaker of the Illinois House.
- State Rep. Thomas Dart, 39, who is running for state treasurer and is the son of William Dart, chief corporation counsel for the late Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley.

Never mind that it's more than three months until the primary election that

*were ne better informed
on Illinois political history.*

*After all, people who
live in glass houses
shouldn't throw stones.*

will determine who will be the Democratic nominees, or that Blagojevich and Madigan must overcome Democratic challengers to become the party's standard bearers. The “All My Children” line is just too cute for Republican minions to pass up.

“The Illinois Democrats seem to believe this is the House of Lords, rather than a representative government,” one GOP functionary told the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. The potential lineup “reeks of inexperience,” he added. “There's a lack of the necessary credentials for some of the offices being sought by these kids.”

Perhaps said critic's tone might have been less condescending, were he

James Thompson, elected to the first of his record four terms in 1976 as a 40-year-old novice.

But perhaps it's not age. Maybe the GOP hangup is with the four Democrats' political connections. That, too, is an argument fraught with hypocrisy for Republicans; who could be so naive as to argue that family ties played no part in launching George W. Bush on the path that ultimately took him to the White House? Or consider former U.S. Sen. Howard Baker Jr., a Tennessee lawyer who was the son-in-law of Illinois' U.S. Sen. Everett McKinley Dirksen well before he was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1966 with the help of his legendary father-in-law.

There's even a political dynasty in Gov. George Ryan's background. When the governor was a freshman Illinois House member in 1973, one of his mentors was former state Sen. Edward McBroom, a Kankakee Republican holding the same seat held for more than a dozen years by his father, former state Sen. Victor McBroom, the long-time Kankakee County GOP chairman.

Nothing in the foregoing refresher

course constitutes an endorsement of any of the Democrats, of course. Rather, the point is that neither age nor family tree should be a primary focus in Campaign 2002. Instead, voters should evaluate each candidate by several criteria, none more important than the individual's position on the key issues. Experience — what someone has done — counts, of course, but perhaps not as much as vision — how the person would address the critical problems facing the state.

For example, no challenge looms larger for those who will be elected next year than the state's current budget crisis. A stagnant economy and soaring health care costs may be the main culprits behind the looming red ink, but the governor and lawmakers must share the blame for their eagerness to spend the erstwhile surplus while embracing rosy revenue projections.

The current fiscal plight also is an unhappy vindication for Hynes, who

Republicans might consider one other reason to eschew the "All My Children" tag for the Democratic hopefuls: The namesake TV show has been a ratings success and Emmy Award winner for more than three decades.

has been warning about coming cash crunches for the past two years. Apparently, his 33-year-old eyes enabled him to read the economic tea leaves better than the folks who put the budget together — the governor and the four legislative leaders — despite their average age of 64 and their 146 years of collective state government experience.

Nor should Illinoisans be satisfied with hoary "I'll cut the waste" rhetoric or lame promises not to raise taxes when candidates discuss the state's fiscal condition. Instead, voters should demand identification, line item by line item, of which agencies the budget-cutters would trim to eliminate the waste, or of how many programs the anti-tax pledgers would be willing to sacrifice under a worst-case scenario. If the candidates will not produce such specifics, voters would be wise to be skeptical of the claims.

Finally, Republicans might consider one other reason to eschew the "All My Children" tag for the Democratic hopefuls: The namesake TV show has been a ratings success and Emmy Award winner for more than three decades. One assumes that's hardly the fate the GOP would wish for the Democratic ticket. □

Charles N. Wheeler III is director of the Public Affairs Reporting Program at the University of Illinois at Springfield.

Always Connected

The future of education is online!

Make UIS online classes part of **your future!** Take a single course or your entire degree program from the University of Illinois at Springfield. Bring the quality learning environment of the University of Illinois at Springfield into the comfort of your home or office...at your convenience. Courses are available in a variety of disciplines and each course is fully transferable. **Sixty-five online** spring classes begin Jan 22, 2002. For more information,



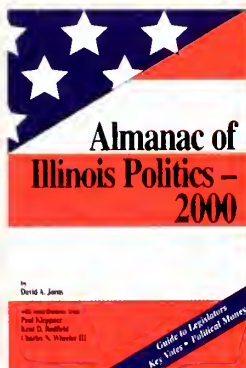
call (217) 206-7317,
or visit <http://online.uis.edu>.
Contact the UIS Office of Admissions
at (217) 206-6626 or (800) 252-8533.



UNIVERSITY of ILLINOIS at SPRINGFIELD ONLINE



Order now!



Almanac of Illinois Politics – 2000

The #1 guide to Illinois government.

The resource for information on the key players in Illinois government

- U.S. Senators, Congressmen, State Senators and State Representatives
- District maps and the “political makeup” of districts
- Voting records on the top issues
- Top PAC contributors, legislators and their opponents

CLOSEOUT PRICE \$9⁹⁵ *plus \$3.00 shipping & handling*

To order this book call (217) 206-6502